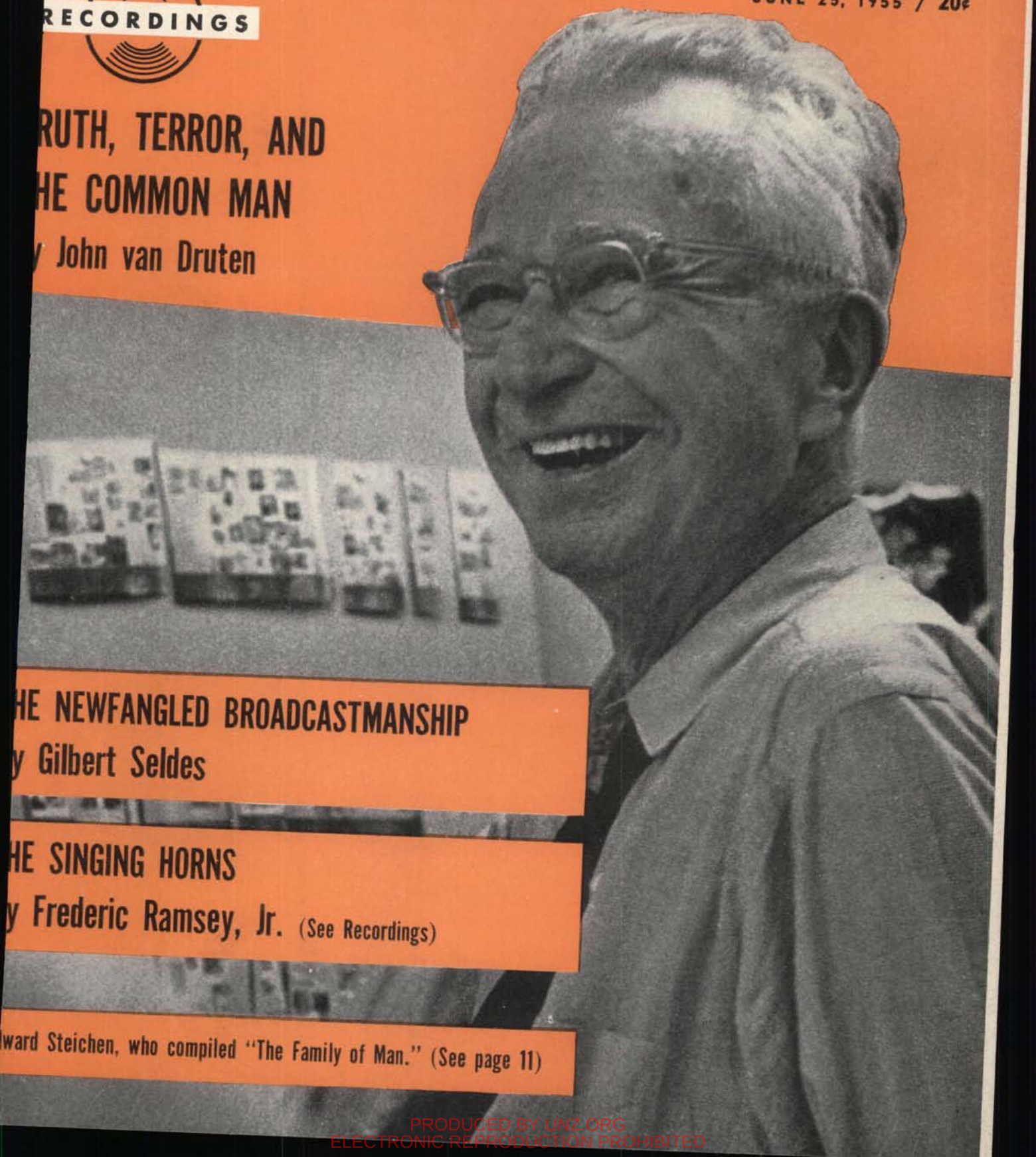
Saturday Review

JUNE 25, 1955 / 20¢

RECORDINGS

RUTH, TERROR, AND HE COMMON MAN

y John van Druten



HE NEWFANGLED BROADCASTMANSHIP

y Gilbert Seldes

HE SINGING HORNS

y Frederic Ramsey, Jr. (See Recordings)

lward Steichen, who compiled "The Family of Man." (See page 11)

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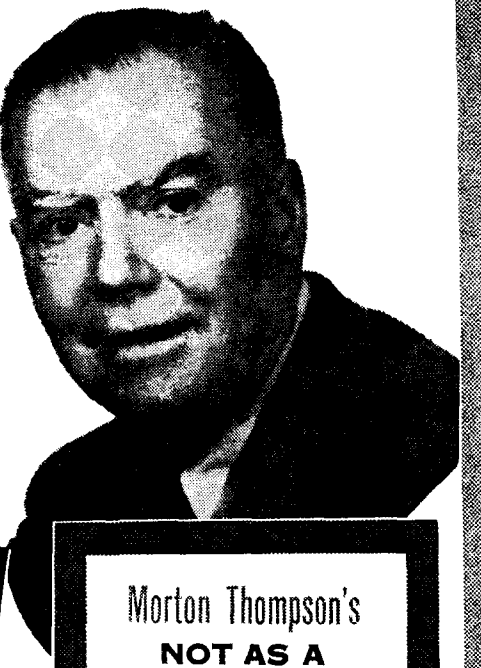

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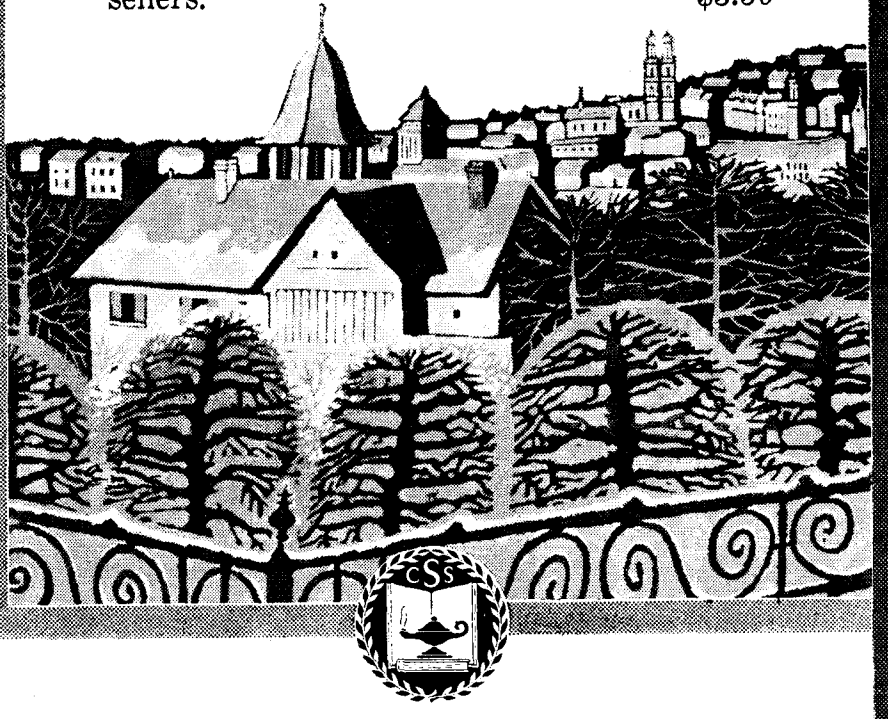

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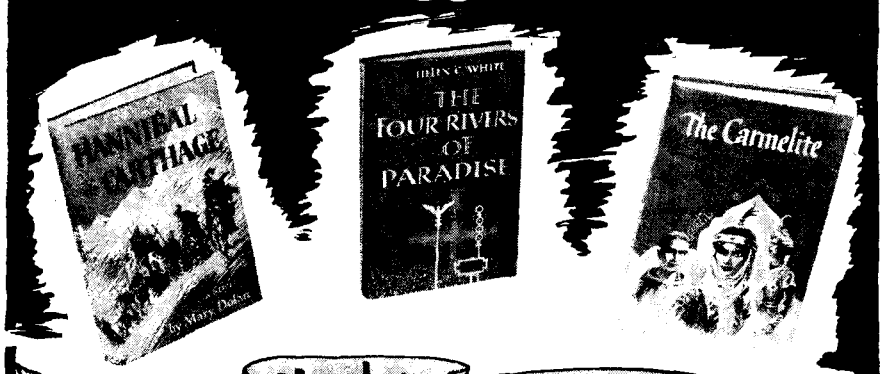

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The Saturday Review

JUNE 25, 1955

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TRADE Winds

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

IIS IS THE YEAR when two of the most ılorful and best-loved figures in the lling end of the book business—Jim rowder and Adam Burger—retired r good after over half a century ɔiece in active service. Burger spent s entire career with one house: arper's.

Crowder entered the book world a McClurg's in Chicago in 1893, ined Scribner's in 1904, Boni and iveright in 1917, and moved over Random House the day that firm ɔened its doors in August 1925. Both en had the imagination, humor, and ıgged individuality that is fading ıt of all mercantile life in these ays of mechanization and imper- ɔnal standardization. The literary ene will be a bleaker one without ıem.

r THE TIME Crowder and Burger made ıeir debut in book circles leading avelers for the big publishing houses ere a different kettle of fish entirely om the college-bred intellectuals ho make the rounds today. Crowder emembers the impressive entrance three of the old-timers on one of is first mornings at McClurg's. They ere decked out, as was the fashion, ı cutaway coats and silk hats, with ed carnations in their lapels and fat gars in their pockets. Probably they ossessed only the sketchiest knowl- dge of the new books in their line, ut their stock of trade gossip and order-line jokes was plentiful, their rinking capacity enormous. Sales- ıen of this era made dry martinis y filling a glass to the brim with raight gin and then yelling "ver- ıouth" at it. To retailers in the sticks" they were an authentic voice om the big city—in a day when no ılopies, motion pictures, or radio ad yet appeared to span the chasm etween urban and rural ways of life.

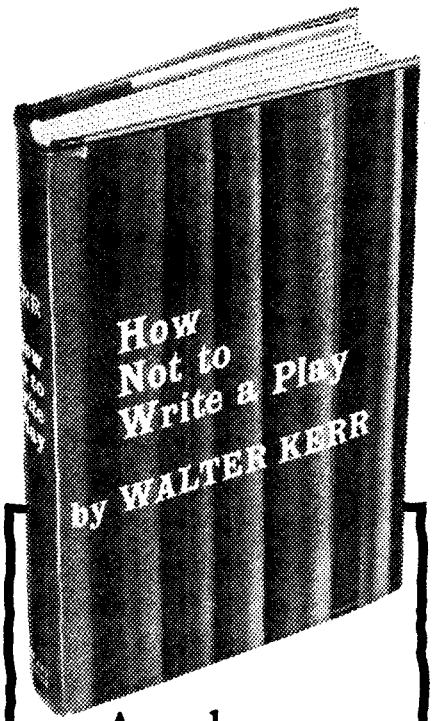
TYPICAL book sales- ıan today covers his erritory several times year, traveling often y plane or in his own utomobile. Fifty years go two trips a year ere considered par for he course—and even fter Crowder and Bur- er got into their stride alesmen still covered territory that at least three men would be required to service adequately today.

LET US SAY that one of the turn-of-the-century fashionplates was heading for his semi-annual visit to Chicago. Weeks before his arrival formal announcements had been mailed to booksellers in smaller cities of the Midwest inviting them to call upon him in Chicago and make known their requirements for the entire fall and holiday season. He would pull up at the entrance of the old Palmer House in style, several bulky trunks full of samples in a dray behind him, and dig in for a stay of three weeks to a month.

His "samples" were full dummies of forthcoming books, either entirely blank or containing a "signature" of sixteen printed pages intended principally to show the kind of type the finished volume would contain. The gay, laminated dust-jackets currently in use were unknown in that day. The veteran salesman would spread his wares on long tables extending from thirty to forty feet around the room, in much the same fashion shoes and toys still are exhibited today; once the arrangement was completed he rarely would bother to disturb it. He knew his spiel for each item more or less by heart, and could deliver unblushingly more clichés to a minute than the emcee of a Grade-B television show.

CROWDER AND BURGER, though they were not to meet until some years later, began their travels at about the same time. Moreover, they both entertained the then heretical notion that they should actually have digested the contents of some of the "sure best-sellers" they were touting. For years both stoutly maintained that they "never read a book," but this was camouflage to prevent their being ostracized by fellow knights of the road.

JIM CROWDER made his initial trip for Scribner's in 1904. Stop Number One was Cleveland, where Jim made a beeline for the bookstore



Applause for a critic

WALTER KERR, distinguished drama critic of the *New York Herald Tribune,* has written his long-awaited first book. In its witty and authoritative pages, Mr. Kerr casts a cold eye on the forces that have been undermining the theater — i.e., the playwrights — and proposes some brilliant recommendations for their reform. How persuasive he has been may be judged by these first reviews:

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by CLEMENCE DANE
Author of Broome Stages

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that is now Korner and Wood's. Having been taught always to close doors behind him when entering a home or place of business, he unthinkingly locked the screen door of Korner and Wood. He was making character and setting up a date with Harry Korner to go over the Scribner line when a furious knocking was heard at the front door. Korner, rushing out to seek the cause of the commotion, found a group of angry prospective customers seeking vainly to gain admittance to the premises. The number of prospective customers does not diminish as Jim Crowder and Harry Korner tell and retell the story.

As time went on Jim Crowder became a lifelong friend as well as salesman for every buyer and clerk in his territory, with the ladies in particular confiding their innermost secrets to him. Not for mere twiddling of thumbs did he become known as the Flo Ziegfeld of Publishers' Row —and in 1954 his deft approach still evoked as many feminine sighs as it had a half-century earlier!

ADAM BURGER'S fifty years of devotion to Harper's were highlighted by his running battles with the man who was his immediate superior during much of the time—efficient, deeply respected, but tightfisted Henry Hoyns. Hoyns had to watch pennies when he was a boy and he never could forget his early training. He had been a shoeshine boy on a harbor ferry when he won the attention of a member of the Morgan clan, who gave him his start at Harper's. Punctuality, precision, and attention to the most minute details were his guiding principles.

To the carefree, irrepressible Adam Burger, Henry Hoyns was a constant challenge. Adam kited his expense slips just to hear Hoyns's cries of pain when he examined them. "I see you spent $1.15 for lunch in Pittsburgh," grumbled Mr. Hoyns one day. "You must have eaten two portions of dessert again!" Another time Hoyns complained so bitterly of the mounting overhead that Adam reached into his pocket and produced a frayed five-dollar bill. "Mr. Hoyns," he declared, "it's obvious that Harper's needs this more than I do."

Adam's wife, Margaret, whom he found in the stenographic department of Harper's, continually urged him to demand a raise from Henry Hoyns. In his farewell address Adam noted, "Had I actually made any one of a dozen appeals she wrote out for me I'd have retired at twenty-four instead of seventy."

IN ONE TOWN, WITH an hour to kill before train time, Burger wandered

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into a hardware store and mesmerized the proprietor into buying fifty dollars' worth of books. He was afraid to turn in the order, however, explaining, "Henry Hoyns would have had me calling on every other hardware store east of the Mississippi!"

As usual, Adam brought a story back from that visit. A man had entered the hardware store just ahead of him, he reported, in search of an old-fashioned wooden potato masher. "I want it for my mother-in-law," the man had explained. The proprietor answered, "We're all out of wooden potato mashers but here's one made of wire. It ought to do very nicely for your mother-in-law. Just hit her a little harder."

THE TITLE OF "sales manager" finally upped Adam Burger's salary materially, but his infectious spirit remained untrammeled. He presided, for instance, at a dinner honoring one of Harper's most prolific and profitable authors, Clarence Budington Kelland. Harper's had sold 512,000 copies of Kelland books in original editions since 1913, not to mention over 3,000,000 reprints. That didn't faze Adam. "At confession a few years ago," he recalled in his welcoming speech, "the priest asked, 'What have you done now: murdered somebody?' 'Worse than that,' I answered. 'I stuck a poor bookseller with twenty-five copies of Bud Kelland's latest book. I promise I'll never do it again'." Kelland interrupted at this point by shouting, "You certainly have kept your word!"

THE CHARACTER of the traveling book salesman has undergone a marked and necessary change in recent years. The tendency to regard books as merchandise rather than literature, and to stress big mail-order promotions and entire series over individual titles, calls for a different type of representative. Furthermore, booksellers now enjoy virtually full return privileges. There is little point in an extremely popular, persuasive salesman writing up bigger orders than the circumstances warrant. Overstock simply comes bouncing back to the publisher for credit at the end of the season.

But when this columnist first broke into the book business in 1923, toting a bagful of samples for Horace Liveright, Jim Crowder and Adam Burger were kingpins in their profession. They were, too, among the first "big shots" who found the time to befriend and advise him. He will never forget the advice or the men who gave it to him.

—Bennett Cerf.

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Of all things, Mr. Bridegroom! Surely you don't expect that lovely new bride to get along without a telephone in the kitchen!

Maybe there was a time when one telephone seemed enough, just as one radio and one bathroom and one car seemed enough.

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In the living room, of course. In the kitchen, conveniently hung on the wall. In the bedroom, to save steps and for added peace of mind both day and night. For the son and daughter who'd like telephones of their own, with separate listings.

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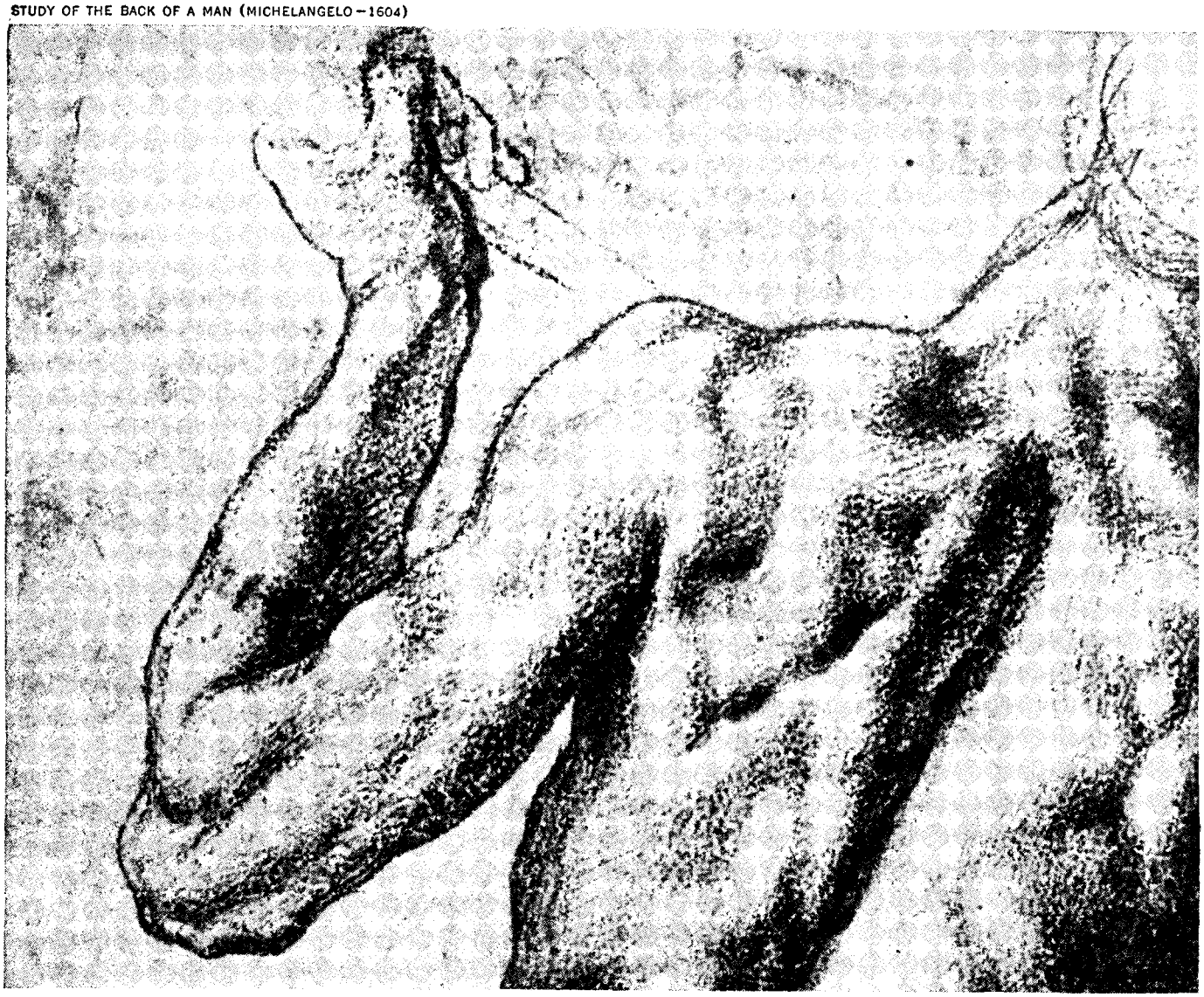
STUDY OF THE BACK OF A MAN (MICHELANGELO—1604)



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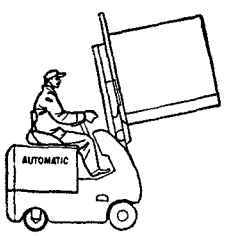

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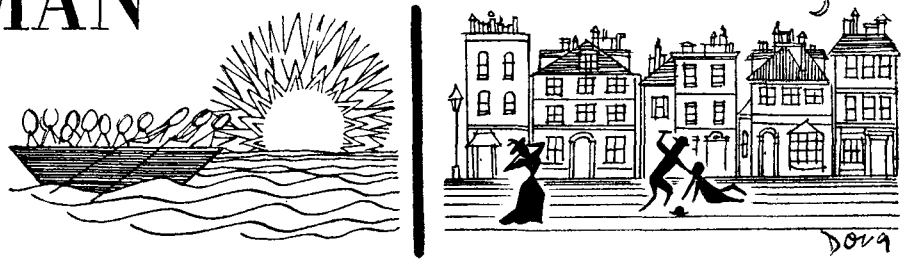
The Saturday Review
JUNE 25, 1955

TRUTH, TERROR, AND THE COMMON MAN



The Englishman of tradition lives a life of crumpets and tranquil constitutional precedent until he has just had more than he can take of his wife, his mother-in-law, or that irritating stranger down the alley. Then he erupts with the cold, vivid ferocity which makes the history of British crime one of the most ghastly and entertaining studies the world affords. To capture the one detail—the "moment of truth"—that penetrates to the heart of a gruesome, shocking event is the concern of John van Druten, famous English-born playwright ("The Voice of the Turtle" and "I Am a Camera") and himself once a lecturer in English law.

By JOHN VAN DRUTEN

HAVE you ever tried to draw from anyone who went through a violent, a shattering experience, an account of his emotions while it was going on? On the few occasions that I have done so I have received almost nothing in reply. A woman who was rescued from *Titanic* gave me, as her only contribution, a moment's vision when she spoke of sitting in the lifeboat in the early morning, watching the sun rise on the blue, calm, and empty sea. Of the rest of the experience—of the panic, the slow understanding, the leaving of the ship, and the realization of what those who were left behind would have to undergo—she could say nothing, except: "It was awful, awful."

That is, apparently, all that people can say of their horrifying experiences, all the communicable mark that they can leave behind them. I have wondered whether this inability comes from a poverty of expression, and whether that poverty does not extend to the whole human race. The words that we know will cover the ordinary experiences, and they must serve to cover the more extraordinary ones as well. Where the situation goes beyond the normal, language recedes, and perhaps the brain and the memory recede as well. And the writers, whose job it is to find the right language to express even the extremest of feelings, one wonders with them, very slightly, whether their training has not affected their memories. Just how accurate, how sincere, are their descriptions, and to what extent have they, professionally, worked them up a little afterwards?

Yet this desire to realize, to know better what it feels like to undergo an agonizing happening, is what holds us most sharply. It is why the melodramas of the stage, the screen, and the popular newspapers have their appeal. It is why we want to read of murders. The murderer, by his act, has put himself outside the ordinary pale. He will walk forever after with a stain of difference on him, or within him, whether he is known or not. He has done a thing that almost every one of us has at one moment wanted to do, and he has become branded in doing it. We want most desperately to know what that brand feels like. He was a normal man whom we would not have recognized had we met him in the streetcar as being any different from the other men. He wears that difference, unseen, now. He must feel differently. We want to share that feeling. We cannot.

I heard a murder trial in London about twenty years ago. It was not an interesting trial, and there was a moment when, during the lengthy

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descriptions of the entrances and exits of the building in which the murder had admittedly occurred, the plans and analyses of details that had no quality to them, I found my head nodding in the crowded, bad air of the Old Bailey, and was appalled at myself for having allowed it to happen. There in the dock, a few feet away from me, sat a man whose life was in danger. Every word that was being spoken was a challenge to his life. How could I fall asleep while that was going on? He would have had the right to call out to me: "Could'st thou not watch with me one hour?" But I could not. The words and arguments of counsel drained all reality, all danger, all human value away from the situation.

There was one moment when the whole story came to life for me. The accused had disappeared after the murder. He was not to be found for the rest of the day. In the morning an elderly friend of his, a postman by profession, was having breakfast in his small, suburban home when the missing man came, falling, into the room. He said: "Oh, Davey, I am bad, bad." These words, with a ghastly foreshortening, gave a sudden reality, an instantaneous picturing, of the man's plight and feelings. At least they did for me. Perhaps to no one else. Perhaps there are words that carry an appeal that is only special and individual. I know that I knew how the lost, the hunted, the unattractive young murderer was feeling, and that when it became obvious what the verdict must be I left the court rather than wait for it. My curiosity did not extend to trying to gauge his feelings when he was sentenced to death. I did not want to watch his face and try to see in it what happened in that rarest, that grimmest, that most ghastly of moments. I had had what I went there for. I had heard it in "Oh, Davey, I am bad, bad." Perhaps that was the same as "It was awful, awful." It was not the same to me.

BUT the fascination of murder goes on, and to me the more ordinary the background, the more recognizable the characters, the greater is its appeal. I have stood outside the houses where murders were committed, trod the last blocks of the walk that led the murderee to his death, stared at the spot on the road where the stabbing took place, handled, even, the actual weapon in the Black Museum at Scotland Yard, as though by doing so I could drag some extra reality from them, pull the truth from them. Not the truth of whether or not this man or this woman was guilty, but the truth of the thing, the feeling, the emotion that turned this house, this street, this weapon into one that was, within itself, so desperately different. That truth is never to be found except where it lurks hidden in remarks such as "Oh, Davey, I am bad, bad." There are many examples of it in the letters that passed in (I had almost written "produced") the famous British murder case of Bywaters and Thompson. This case has been used many times by novelists and playwrights, and its happening in 1922 affected the imaginations of many thousands of people. Mrs. Edith Thompson was an apparently ordinary working woman of the suburbs, neither happily nor unhappily married. She met and fell violently in love with a young ship's steward named Frederick Bywaters, and during his long voyages she wrote him letters in which she described every detail of her daily life, the books she had been reading, and all the dreams that sprang from her imaginative interpretation of them. She also interspersed her letters with what were read as suggestions for a possible murder of her husband, drawing a good deal on Robert Hichens's novel "Bella Donna" to enflame them. In the end Bywaters, home on leave, waited for Mr. Thompson on a walk home from the theatre in the company of his wife and stabbed him to death. There was no doubt of his guilt; the incident sprang from a sudden and overwhelming fit of jealousy. After he was arrested all of Mrs. Thompson's letters were found, and on the strength of them she, too, was charged with murder. There seems to be little doubt now that she was wholly innocent, and that her letters were no more than the dream outpourings of an overimaginative woman, but she was hanged, all the same.

Very few of Bywaters's letters remain. They had vowed to destroy all correspondence. Mrs. Thompson kept her vow almost entirely; Bywaters, for reasons that have been guessed at but never solved, reneged on his. Yet there is one letter of his that survives. In it he refers to his longing to "drink Beaune with you," making that three-and-sixpenny half-bottle of Beaune wine become something akin to the love-potion in "Tristan and Isolde," which indeed it was. Mrs. Thompson's letters to him, pages and pages of them, are filled with just such details. She had an amazing power of self-expression, giving away the whole of herself in every letter. One knows the woman almost too well from them, shuddering at the intimacy that they produce.

But Edith Thompson was not a murderess; she was a woman who was caught in sudden, inexplicable involvements that she may have unwound from her own consciousness, from which a murder happened. But it did happen, and she was hanged for her apparent complicity in it as well as for her sex-guilt. One can read, can follow almost every step of the way in which it grew into being. The wonder there is that it did happen, and it is for a tracing of that, a search for the cancerous thing that made it happen then, when it did not happen in similar instances, that one reads those letters again and again.

One averts one's eyes and one's thoughts from the time that passes between the trial and the execution. The people have moved, with the verdict, beyond recognizability, beyond reach of anything that we can know. The terrors that come to them, we tell ourselves, will not come to us in that way. And we are frightened, too, perhaps, of something that we are, in the end, accountable for—capital pun-

(*Continued on page* 26)

Your Literary I. Q.

Conducted by John T. Winterich

THE LADY IN QUESTION

Antoinette G. Wike of Lexington, North Carolina, informs you that each of the following authors has written a book (novel, biography, or play) about a woman with the same basic first name (allow for recognizable variants). Of course, when you know one or two, you have found the lady, but what is the correct title of each book? Five correct answers is minimal to your peace of mind; seven to nine, your mental security is sounder; ten or better, you can rest assured. Answers on page 17.

1. Maxwell Anderson
2. Lucy Maud Montgomery
3. Margaret Landon
4. Leo Tolstoi
5. Eugene O'Neill
6. Sinclair Lewis
7. Sir Walter Scott
8. H. G. Wells
9. Arnold Bennett
10. William Dean Howells
11. Philip Yordan
12. Herbert and Dorothy Fields

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—*Eugene Harris, Peru.*

"THE FAMILY OF MAN," an exhibition mirroring "the universal elements and emotions in the everydayness of life" through 503 photographs from sixty-eight countries, opened at the New York's Museum of Modern Art on January 26. When it closed on May 8 more than 270,000 persons had paid sixty cents apiece to see the exhibition, created by Edward Steichen, director of the museum's Department of Photography.

The exhibition will be shown in more than six cities during the year. A book containing virtually all the photographs, plus a prologue by Carl Sandburg and an introduction by Mr. Steichen, has just been published in two editions: a $10 boxed edition (Simon and Schuster) and a $1 paper edition (Maco Magazine Corp.).

—*Gitel Stead, India.*

—*Fenno Jacobs, Yugoslavia (Black Star).*

—*George Silk, Jamaica* (Life).

The Family of Man

AT THE age of seventy-six Edward Steichen, director of the department of photography at New York's Museum of Modern Art, has decided to begin his third apprenticeship in photography. "It's as though Hemingway, say, were going back to English Composition I," a student of photography gasped the other day. Steichen's first apprenticeship goes back to the turn of the century, his second to the post-World War I years, and though he insisted then and later that he had quite a few courses to go before his photographic education was complete, he nevertheless began being described as "the world's greatest photographer," "the founder and master of modern photography," and "dean of American photographers." Even when he was still painting (and painting well enough to be hung in museums), prior to 1920, he was regarded as one of the best of the best photographers. In the last eight years, however, he has taken only a snapshot or two, and his shutter finger has become unbearably restless. Steichen had outlawed himself as a working photographer back in 1947. By then V-J Day had ended his Navy job of photographing battles, and he joined the Museum. With that he gave up all his own picture-taking, he said, because it was the only way he could be absolutely objective about other people's work. It also gave him time to assemble twenty-nine exhibitions, including this year's "The Family of Man," which is generally regarded as the most challenging assignment ever handed photography. Anyway, during the three years or so he had spent on assembling the exhibition—he and Wayne Miller, his assistant on the show, had studied 2,000,000 photographs—the world kept trooping by outside, and Steichen began getting increasingly impatient to photograph it. "The itch to photograph again is now very strong," he chuckles, like

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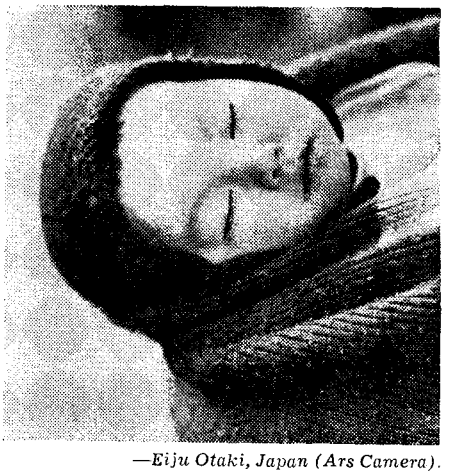
—Henri Cartier-Bresson, USA (Magnum).

—Robert Doisneau, France (Rapho Guillumette-Vogue).

—Rudolf Busler, Germany (Institut für Bildjournalismus).

A camera testament, a drama of the grand canyon of humanity.

—Russell Lee, USA (Farm Security Administration).



—Eiju Otaki, Japan (Ars Camera).

a boy who has just been given a Brownie. "I don't think that it will now interfere with my objectivity."

IN his office the other afternoon Steichen talked easily and happily about his approaching apprenticeship. "I don't want to have any preconceived ideas about what I'm going to do. I'm just going to begin photographing and let it come out. There are so *many* things I want to photograph. I honestly don't know what I will do. I do know, though, that it will have to do with people, with things, with growth. Otherwise, I don't know. I want to be free."

In his life-long battle to conquer "that charlatan, Light," as Corot once put it (the phrase is often attributed to Steichen), Steichen has employed both painting and photography. He was born in Luxembourg in 1879, but his family came to the United States shortly thereafter. They settled in Milwaukee. As a boy he delivered messages for Western Union, and his salary and tips paid for his first camera, a Folding Detective. Photography hasn't been the same since. Those years, between 1897 and 1900, represented his first apprenticeship. He divided his time between photography and painting, experimenting in both. In photography, for example, he sought a misty quality; when he wanted to photograph a building on a day on which there was no cooperative fog he'd rub a little spit on the lens. Some of his photographs were accepted in 1899 for exhibition at a museum. By 1901 Steichen and Paris were ready for each other.

In Paris, London, and elsewhere, Steichen met Rodin, Shaw, Anatole France, Clemenceau, and other notables, all of whom he photographed. He kept on painting, though; indeed, his painting financed his photography. Occasionally he'd return to New York. Dashing from the boat to Alfred Stieglitz's Photo-Secession Galleries at 291 Fifth Avenue, of which he was a prominent member, Steichen, afire with the latest art news, would report on the artists he had seen. Rodin! Picasso! Matisse! By 1908, partly as a result of his enthusiasm, "291" held its first of a series of revolutionary exhibitions of modern art never before seen here. As for his own paintings, they, too, had caught on, and were hung in, among other museums, the Metropolitan and Luxembourg.

His decision to devote 100 per cent of his time to photography and none to painting came shortly after World War I. (During it he had commanded the photographic section of the Air Service of the AEF.) One day in 1920, at his Voulangis cottage, outside of Paris, he saw a painting on his easel.

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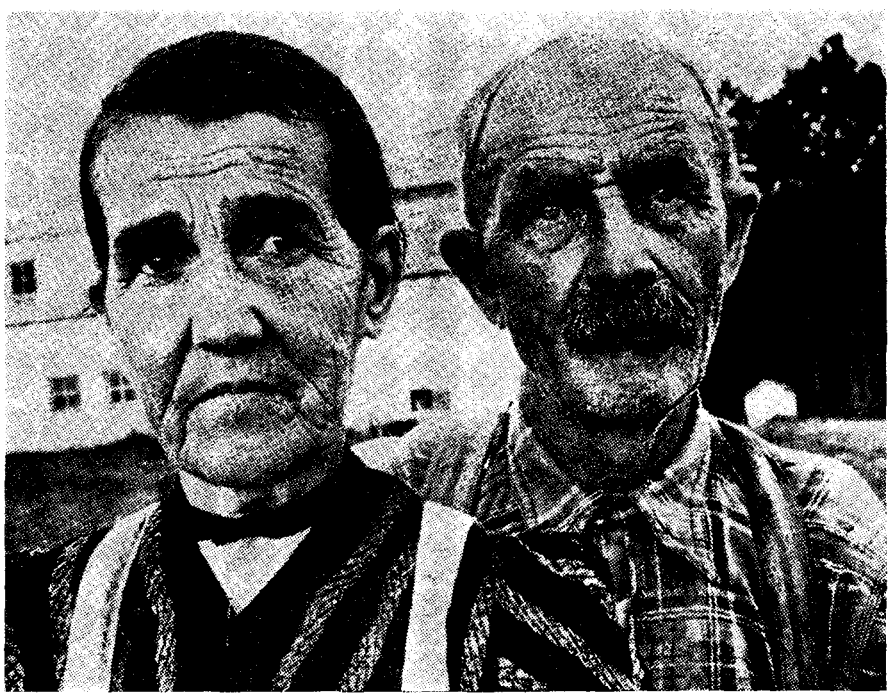
—Bob Jackson, USA (Los Angeles Times).

—Robert Kapa, USSR. (Magnum-Ladies' Home Journal).

Frank Scherschel, France (Life).



—John Phillips, Canada (Life).

There is only one man in the world and his name is All Men.

—Ruth Orkin, USA.

It was a copy of one of his own paintings, and when he asked who had done it his gardener said he had. He added that he had done lots of others, too. Steichen studied them. When he concluded they were in a way better than his he took all the Steichens in the house and made a big pile, to which he applied a match. The bonfire—"my gardener and I danced around it like Comanche Indians"—was a blazing testimonial to photography, and Steichen hasn't picked up a brush since. He was past forty then.

He immediately settled down for a year's concentrated study of photography. He took more than 1,000 pictures of a cup and saucer and when he at last abandoned them he had achieved mastery of every detail of his compositions. He had junked photographic fuzziness for precise detail. "It was about then, too, that I began to feel that I wasn't close enough to life in the work—mostly painting—that I was doing," he said. "I wanted to belong, to get close to life. I realized that painting was growing further and further away from representation, and that that was being left to photography. Photography, I felt, was more closely related than painting to what I was looking for in life."

Back in this country he spent fifteen years, between 1923 and 1938, as chief photographer for Condé Nast's *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue*. He later signed a contract with the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. He took photographs of famous people and products account executives were trying to make famous. Chaplin, Tunney, Mencken, and others paraded before his lens almost as frequently as bottles of Jergens Lotion. His portraits, either of people or products, were spectacularly striking and successful. Others he photographed at one time or another included J. P. Morgan, President Taft, Greta Garbo, Richard Strauss, Isadora Duncan, and World War II. He was a Captain in the Navy in charge of a special aviation photographic unit, and he was aboard the USS *Lexington* when it was torpedoed in the Pacific in 1943. Two years later he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal, and two years after that he came to the Museum.

"The possibilities of the Brownie have not yet been exhausted," Steichen observed, after bringing matters up to June 1955. "And right now I want to get started on my reapprenticeship. My three apprenticeships—well, if you want to call the first 'freshman,' the second 'cup and saucer,' and the third 'sophomore,' go ahead. I know I'll never reach graduate student." —Bernard Kalb.

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Double Portrait of an Epoch

"Daniel Webster and the Rise of National Conservatism," by Richard N. Current *(Little, Brown. 215 pp. $3), and* ***"Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age," by John William Ward*** *(Oxford University Press. 274 pp. $4.75), study an important American era and its trends through the personalities of two of its foremost figures. They are reviewed below by Professor John A. Garraty of Michigan State College, author of "Henry Cabot Lodge: A Biography."*

By John A. Garraty

ONE of the advantages of the Great Man theory of history is that it makes the past seem warm, vivid, and easily understood. Another is that it shrinks vast social forces to human size, and fits man to an heroic mold, vicariously flattering to the most insignificant of the species. If outstanding individuals fashion great events by their genius man assumes a transcendent importance in the scheme of things. Lesser beings can feel that they, too, are masters of their fates. If men make events, then history is man—animate, fascinating, personal—and the comprehension of the past can be reduced to the seemingly simple injunction: "Know thyself."

Sophisticates cannot swallow whole this uncomplicated view. Still, they realize that individuals do help to make history, however other forces may circumscribe them. They know, too, how much can be gained by using people to personify trends and movements. Thus it is that John William Ward ties his portrait of the early American mind to Jackson in "Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age" and Richard N. Current examines conservative thought in the same period through the career of Webster in "Daniel Webster and the Rise of National Conservatism."

Current's "Daniel Webster" is one of the best volumes that has yet come out of the Library of American Biography series. The purpose of the series, in the words of its editor, Oscar Handlin, is "to assess the role of men in history," describing neither "the complete man [n]or the complete society, but the point at which the two interact." Current has done this admirably. He stresses Webster's function as the spokesman for Eastern business interests, and the influence of his "national conservatism" in reconciling the conflicting demands of property owners and popular government.

Webster changed sides time and again on specific issues; he began as a believer in *laissez faire* and ended a proponent of big government. But through every twist and turn of doctrine his basic assumption remained fixed: an expanding economy would wipe out class lines and benefit everyone. "The effect of commerce and manufactures, as all history shows, [is] everywhere to diffuse wealth and not aid its accumulation in few hands." Defense Secretary Charles Wilson made the same point when he reasoned that what was good for General Motors was good for America. As Current says, Webster's "usable conservatism" was "in many ways more useful than Hamilton's to latter-day businessmen."

In a book of this type there is little room for defining the subject's personality. Current mentions Webster's overweening desire for the Presidency, but does not explain its source. He refers to Webster's knack of running through large sums of money, but tells little of what he did with it, or why so many people were ready to pour funds into his bottomless pockets.

Webster—"bottomless pockets."

But in brief compass Mr. Current has produced a portrait that will revive interest in "the forgotten man of American conservatism."

WARD'S approach is quite different. Where Current sees Webster as the spokesman for an age Ward treats Jackson passively, as a reflection of an age. His thesis is that the commonly-held beliefs of Americans between 1815 and 1845 can be found by analyzing what they said about one man, Andrew Jackson. "Through the age's leading figure," Ward argues, "were projected the age's leading ideas."

After studying Fourth of July orations, popular histories, campaign biographies, eulogies, cartoons, and paintings Ward has found three basic elements in the people's image of Jackson: Nature, Providence, and Will. Old Hickory was a child of Nature, uncorrupted by the effete East; he was "God's Right-Hand Man," guided by Providence to inevitable victory; and he was a man of tremendous Will, determined, forceful, and self-made. Since Ward can demonstrate that this stereotype of Jackson is not entirely accurate he concludes that the people made Jackson a symbol of themselves, and attributed to him the qualities they admired and believed in.

This idea is challenging. Democratic leaders do "represent" their constituents; they symbolize the majority. The author's reliance on popular writing is refreshing after so many "intellectual" histories based on the study of "formal" literature. But the argument is carried too far, and the method is frequently abused. Was the contemporary view of Jackson primarily symbolic? Are not Jackson's idolators

Correspondence

By Alfred Kreymborg

WHEN it comes to the lasting name of one
Who was born to labor to the bone,
Let him be remembered, if at all,
As a man who gave his life to the long call
Of an earth whose correspondence will survive
All other forms; her arts are still alive.
And this is now the place where he's at home,
Gratified to live with a little stone.

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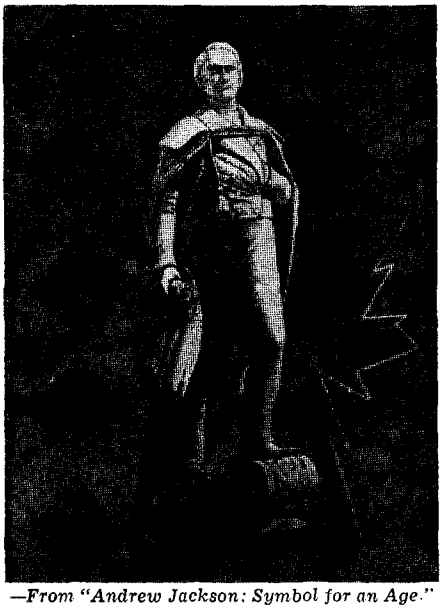
simply praising his actual qualities." Ward has found numerous incorrect statements about him, but it is true that he was a rough, hot-tempered child of Nature. He did have a strong will. And even an atheist surveying his career would be struck by the element of Providence (the atheist would call it luck) in his rise to fame. "I am fixed in my course as the Rockey mountain," Old Hickory once wrote. "Providence has a power over me, but frail mortals who worship Ball and the golden calf can have none." These words illustrate the reality behind the "image" of Jackson.

Ward often ignores the context of his evidence. Take the 1828 Presidential race. The Jackson spellbinders praised their man's lack of education, while the supporters of the cultured John Quincy Adams charged that Jackson was "unfit." Jackson won the election; from this Ward concludes that the folk disparaged learning. But does this follow? Compare 1828 with the recent "egghead" controversy. Stevenson was defeated, and intellect held in contempt, but would it be fair to say that Stevenson's brilliant and witty speeches cost him votes? Other factors were involved. To say that nineteenth-century America gloried in its ignorance is a half-truth. Ward forgets America's passion for public education, as powerful in Jackson's day as in our own.

Like most writers with a novel thesis, Ward overstates his case. Of course, Jackson was a symbol of his age. But that is not the whole truth, either about Jackson or the age. And Mr. Ward is very lucky that Old Hickory cannot know how a "frail mortal" has tried to reduce him to the status of a symbol.



—*From "Andrew Jackson: Symbol for an Age."*

Jackson as the S.S. *Constitution* figurehead.

You Are at Vicksburg

***"The Web of Victory," by Earl Schenck Miers** (Alfred A. Knopf. 320 pp. $5), is a vivid re-creation of the crucial Vicksburg campaign as it appeared to one of its chief participants, General U. S. Grant. T. Harry Williams of Louisiana State University, who reviews it below, is the author of the currently published biography "Bureaugard: Napoleon in Gray."*

By T. Harry Williams

IN TWO books about the Civil War, one dealing with the battle of Gettysburg and the other with Sherman's march to Atlanta, Earl Schenck Miers employed a historical technique that he has now carried to greater perfection in "The Web of Victory," which deals with U. S. Grant and the Vicksburg campaign. If Mr. Miers did not originate this particular methodology, at least he is its most prominent practitioner. It may well be described by a word in the publisher's blurb—"evocation." The idea is to take a short and dramatic segment of history that is dominated by a principal dramatic figure—Sherman, Grant—and study intensively the actions of the chief actor and his associates and how those actions affected everybody, big and small, in the situation under review. By concentrating on one episode and by producing as many witnesses as possible to depict the episode the writer evokes the mood of a tiny part of the past. Again to quote the publisher, this is the technique of an informed and gifted reporter. It is also the approach to history which has been used by radio and television. Mr. Miers's book is a published version of "You Are There."

"The Web of Victory" is concerned with three themes. The first is the emergence of Grant as a general prior to Vicksburg and the beginnings of the operations against the mighty fortress that controlled the Mississippi River line—a portrait of a general who had not as yet discovered the greatness within him. The second is the awakening of Grant's genius as he devised and directed the smashing campaign that lifted his army out of the swamps and bayous above Vicksburg to the high ground below it and that brought him to the very gates of the city—a movement that is rightly ranked as one of the most brilliant in military annals. The third is the continued growth of Grant during the long, dull siege of forty-seven days—a period in which Grant showed that he possessed pertinacity as well as imagination.

Almost every person who had anything to do with Vicksburg and who left a record that Mr. Miers could locate gets into his story. All the big people are here: Lincoln, Grant, Halleck, Sherman, and others on the Union side, and for the Confederates Jefferson Davis, Joe Johnston, John C. Pemberton, and lesser luminaries. So are the little people: reporters, enlisted men, civilians in Vicksburg, and Negro refugees. And they all talk or write in lengthy quotes, for it is a part of Mr. Miers's technique to let his characters, as much as possible, create the "evocation." The result is something like a huge, detailed painting of the Vicksburg campaign—a canvas crowded with people and scenes and splashed in many colors. Many of the actors are pictured with rare vividness, particularly General John A. McClernand, the ambitious and obstreperous corps commander who gave Grant so much trouble before he was tossed out of the Army. Many of the scenes, especially the ones dealing with the reactions of humans to war, are depicted with rare insight and skill. But sometimes the very richness of the portrait becomes a fault. The author's descriptive prose and the ornate prose he quotes obscure clarity. The reviewer doubts that some of the accounts of pre-battle planning and of battles will mean much to readers not already familiar with the events.

"THE Web of Victory" is an important addition to a recent important literature of the Civil War. For many years the impression was fixed in the history books that nearly all the Southern generals were daring, imaginative, superior officers who fought gallantly and skilfully and in the end succumbed only to great odds. Nearly all the Northern generals were magnificent incompetents or, at the best, plodding dullards who won only because they had overwhelming resources at their command. Assuming the facts to be true it was difficult to understand how the North won the

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war or the South managed to lose it. Of course, the facts were not true. The North could not have won if its generals had been as bad as pictured. Victory is not achieved just on the basis of superiority in human and material assets. Somebody has to organize and direct the resources of a nation at war. There emerged in the North, in the persons of Grant, Sherman, Thomas, and others, a group of generals who were at least the equal of the best the South had to offer. *They* were one big reason the North won. This fact is now beginning to be realized, with the result that new studies of the Northern commanders, from a new perspective, have been undertaken. In this reappraisal, perhaps for some people an "agonizing" one, the chief attention of investigators has naturally been directed to Grant. The recent evaluations of Bruce Catton, K. P. Williams, and others, and now of Mr. Miers, added to the earlier works of General Fuller and Colonel Conger, should place Grant in his rightful military place: a great general, one who had faults and made mistakes, but, nevertheless, great.

A final word about Mr. Miers's technique. It has its merits and also its defects, the greatest of which is that the story has to stop before it is over, to cease, so to speak, in midair. It comes as a terrific letdown after finishing the great events at Vicksburg to learn that Grant welcomed the end of the war so that he could again lace his wife's shoes in the morning!

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT NO. 626

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 626 will be found in the next issue.

DQAHEHTE HT F JHCK

DW NPFGA TAHEXRFCA—

ANP KHOHAFRHT

DW WFHRXGP.

PRMPGA NXMMFGK

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 625

Journalism is organized gossip.
—Edward Eggleston.

FICTION

Coming of Age in the Golden City

***"The Four Rivers of Paradise," by Helen C. White** (Macmillan. 246 pp. $3.50), is the story of the education of a young Christian nobleman at the time of the sack of Rome.*

By Ben Ray Redman

EVEN now, after two world wars, it is possible to say that the sack of Rome by Alaric shocked the imagination of mankind as it has been shocked by no other event in recorded history. It is around this stupendous happening that Helen C. White has built her new novel, "The Four Rivers of Paradise."

Her tale begins in 404 A.D. when Hilary, a young Aquitanian nobleman, a Christian, and the heir to vast estates, arrives in Rome with the intention of seeing the City before settling down to the duties that will come to him with his patrimony. In Rome Hilary places himself under the protection of Symmachus, the great senator. It is a wise choice of patrons, both for Hilary and Miss White: for the one because Symmachus is a man of power and influence; for the other because "the circle of Symmachus"—in the words of Samuel Dill—"is better known to us than any other of that time," and provides the historical novelist with a comparative abundance of material.

The society in which Hilary finds himself is fascinating and complex. The conflict between paganism and Christianity has not yet been resolved. Indeed, despite imperial decrees designed to extirpate it, paganism is still alive and vigorous. Families are divided within themselves—in many the wife is a devout Christian, while the husband regards with wholesome respect the ancient gods who have done so well by Rome. But in many instances these divisions are provocative of surprisingly little bitterness. Symmachus himself, a pagan of the pagans and an eloquent defender of the old faith, lives on the best of terms with Christian friends. A momentary balance between old and new beliefs has been achieved, at least in the higher reaches of Roman society. But below them, of course, intolerance and hatred rage.

It is to those higher reaches that Miss White's hero belongs by birth, and he begins by entering upon his birthright with assurance. But as he lives he learns, and "The Four Rivers of Paradise" might well have been sub-titled "The Education of Hilary of Bordeaux." It is an education that involves many teachers; not only Symmachus and his friends, not only pagan and Christian ladies, but Attis the dusky dancer, Stilicho and Stilicho's wife and daughter, Paulinus of Nola, Pope Innocent I, Jerome, Eustochium, Augustine—and Alaric. When these teachers have done their work Hilary knows what work is his to do in the world.

He is living with Jerome, in his monastery at Bethlehem, when Alaric enters Rome. He, and we, learn of the fall and rape of the city only at second hand, from successive waves of refugees. This may cause some readers to think that Miss White has dodged her big scene; but she may have gained rather than lost by removing Hilary from the vortex of the action.

And she was probably wise to bring us news of Stilicho's death, instead of making us witnesses of his betrayal and execution. There is much to be said for the device of the Greek tragic messenger. Had sensationalism been her object all would have been different; but she has shunned it, even when dealing with material that would easily lend itself to the most sensational treatment. Her style is restrained, decorous. There are fine passages in her novel, but no purple patches. There is much careful writing, but no straining after effects. The characters are drawn simply, without elaboration; and the reader is left to discover for himself whatever depths may lie beneath the surfaces.

That there is more conscientious workmanship than literary power in "The Four Rivers of Paradise" is, I am afraid, true. But the book merits hospitality and respect at a time when the historical novel has been so widely debased.

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Notes

DRY ROT IN PENNSYLVANIA: Warren Eyster, author of "Far from the Customary Skies," has published another novel, very much in the American grain, entitled **"No Country for Old Men"** (Random House, $4.95). Spanning half a century of life in a small steel town in Pennsylvania (1889-1941), and having among its characters a representative population sample, its purpose would seem to be to demonstrate the way in which social and, to a lesser degree, biological forces weakened the moral fabric of a typical American community until it gave way with rot, its motives confused, its stamina diminished, its behavior vicious. The normal drives of the parents assume paranoid proportions in the children, and the book ends in a welter of spiritual agony and physical violence which is not given sufficient symbolic or narrative justification, but is horrifying nonetheless.

While Mr. Eyster fails in the attempt to imbed his events in the larger context of a radically changing society, it is the ambitious failure of real ability, and in many particulars he succeeds excellently, displaying a wide-ranging virtuosity reminiscent of that of Dos Passos in "U.S.A." (The section describing a child's experiences with the world of sensory impressions contains astonishing insights; the choice of physical details with which a scene is constructed or an era recalled is strikingly appropriate.) One seldom doubts that the author understands his complex characters, but he does seem to have bitten off more than he can chew, even in 600 pages, and there are some crucial blank spots to which should have been devoted some of the attention lavished on episodes that, though rewarding in themselves, are not of great relevance to the total scheme. —JEROME STONE.

STOCKING TEASER: Over many years Erskine Caldwell has produced a gallery of robust characters whose eccentricities and often bawdy behavior became almost too familiar to his readers. He moved his characters from Tobacco Road to a dilapidated Maine village but their behavior remained the same, and so do they in **"Gretta"** (Little, Brown, $3.50), a somewhat naive and slightly shocking love story set this time in a remote Midwestern city. Gretta is an orphan who, having grown up in a flat and treeless village, graduates from the state business college and finds a job in Unionville as a secretary in the local gas and electric company. Obsessed by

Warren Eyster—"wide-ranging virtuosity."

a morbid fear of loneliness and insecurity, she persuades a young office worker (and, in rapid succession, several others) to take her to her shabby apartment, where she promptly attempts seduction. Her trick is to sit on the floor of her room and to pull off her stockings "with such seductive and arch coquetry that no man could resist her." Says Mike Follett, who is the manager of a dairy company, for example, "Come on, Gretta. It's time to go home and put something between our two slices of bread." They go to her room, and after Gretta does her stocking trick she says, "Please be selfish. I am going to be selfish that way, too."

Then one night young Dr. Glenn Kenworthy, unmarried and lonely, looks Gretta over, goes home with her, and is enthralled by the stocking routine. In a month they are married and in not much more time Glenn comes home to find the girl in tears and a few crumpled dollar bills on the bed table. The novel ends a few months later with Gretta sitting on the floor, repeating her stocking striptease act before another victim, who begs of her, "Tell me something. Has anyone else seen you do that?" A smile of happiness brightens Gretta's countenance.

The question remains as to why Mr. Caldwell wrote the novel. Is it a case history of a nymphomanic who must captivate a succession of lovers to find any reality in life? Perhaps so. At any rate, it appears that Mr. Caldwell has discovered a theory of sexual misbehavior that Dr. Kinsey has missed. —HARRISON SMITH.

THE EVIL YEARS: Robert Wilder's **"The Wine of Youth"** (Putnam, $3.95) should salve a great many Texan wounds occasioned by Edna Ferber's satirical spoof called "Giant." His raw and violent novel is just as melodramatic and as overdrawn as Miss Ferber's (and it is just as good reading), but where Miss Ferber indicted the men of the Lone Star State for their crudity, their ignorance, and their ruthless contempt for social sympathy, Mr. Wilder suggests that the Texas tycoon is drunk with the wine of youth. The novel deals with the formation of a powerful political machine in Southern Texas, and with two fellows named Costello who, being father and son, cut themselves in on Texan wealth by paying the poll taxes of a second-class Mexican-American community and using the ballots to carry every election. In the middle of all this, there are many vivid scenes of Texans at play, all of them desperately determined to have more fun than anybody else, to run Washington and, in addition, to buy up the other forty-seven states. For sheer hilarity few books of the past decade equal the scene of a Texas binge at the national Democratic Convention in Chicago in 1932—a binge in which one Policeman Brady temporarily demoralizes all the cat houses of the Windy City.

All this makes for an exciting novel, but it is one in which the events are truer than the people. Even Mr. Wilder's title itself is ambivalent, for youth is strangely absent: the male protagonists are weary from power-struggles and sex obsessions, and the four chief women characters are in three instances considerably used and soiled before they appear either in Texas or in the story. At novel's end the younger Costello, who is Mr. Wilder's hero and who has inherited the political machine from the senior Costello, is chastened into maturity and is thereby ready to devote himself to the quality of personal relationships instead of amassing more millions. Which brings the Costellos in two generations from Homeric vigor to Proustian subtlety! We doubt this conclusion and we doubt also the implication that evil in Texas (or anywhere, for that matter) is just a youthful stage to be outgrown in the slow process of social maturity.

—LON TINKLE.

LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. "Anne of the Thousand Days." 2. "Anne of Green Gables." 3. "Anna and the King of Siam." 4. "Anna Karenina." 5. "Anna Christie." 6. "Ann Vickers." 7. "Anne of Geierstein." 8. "Ann Veronica." 9. "Anna of the Five Towns." 10. "Annie Kilburn." 11. "Anna Lucasta." 12. "Annie Get Your Gun."

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FARAWAY PLACES

Tilting at a Mountaintop

"Tiger of the Snows" (G. P. Putnam's Sons. 294 pp. $4.50), is the autobiography of Tenzing, one of the two men to attain the heights of Everest, written in collaboration with James Ramsey Ullman.

By Raymond Holden

WHEN the first attempt to approach Everest was made by Europeans more than thirty years ago a little boy of eight years was tending yaks in the district of Solo Khumba on the mountain slopes of northeastern Nepal nearer to the great mountain than any man not a native of the region had ever been. This boy was the son of a villager of Mongolian stock whose ancestors had come over the mountains from Tibet to Nepal many generations earlier. The boy, whose name was originally Namgyal Wangdi, was vaguely intended for the priesthood, was named "Wealthy-Fortunate-Follower of Religion," which in the local letterless speech transliterated into English came out Tenzing Norgay.

Tenzing belonged to the group of people called Sherpa, a name which most Europeans and Americans long supposed was a designation for "porter," which it no more means than American or English means businessman. The Sherpas were and are mountain men. They have mountain air in their blood. It is not strange that they should have taken up the matter of traveling with climbers. They have been on every peak in the Himalayas and it certainly can be said that no important climb in Nepal, Sikkim, or Tibet has been made without them. They are neither porters nor guides in any real sense. They are helpers. In the Himalayas there is so much to carry that everyone carries something and there is so little knowledge of routes that no one can set himself up as a guide. Yet the European use of Sherpas did for a long time give them the status of servants, though they certainly never thought of themselves as such.

Tenzing Norgay, the Sherpa, thought only of going places and particularly of mountains, of the mountain "so high no bird could fly over it," which was Everest. He left his hill home more than once, always in an effort to associate himself with climbing. It was difficult at first, for experience, which he lacked, was what was wanted. It was not long, however, before his abilities became recognized and his genial nature and outgoing spirit highly prized. He learned the ways of Europeans and his tactful resourcefulness taught him how to help manage his own people. His reputation grew after several trips to Everest and other great peaks to such an extent that in 1952 and 1953 he climbed to over 25,000 feet on that mountain with three expeditions, reaching the summit with the last.

TENZING'S story, which James Ramsey Ullman has let him tell in what appear to be substantially his own words, is the noble and beautiful story of an uneducated Buddhist boy who grew up to exhibit all the virtues of what Occidentals often speak of as a "Christian gentleman" and all the skill, natural wisdom, strength, courage, and character which Westerners like to think of as attributes of their civilization alone.

Tenzing was, as the British are a little too eager to point out and as he himself graciously agrees, merely a member of a team, but he is outstanding for the qualities which made him, with so much less background opportunity than his European companions, a leader and a conquering spirit.

Tenzing reached the summit of Everest because he was Tenzing. Unless he had been the man he was and is he would never have had the opportunity to pair off with Hillary for the final attack. Unless he had been the great climber that he is, filled with a passionate earnestness to succeed in what he attempts, he would have turned about in the bitter cold like some of his fellow Sherpas and gone below, putting his bodily comfort before his spiritual accomplishment.

Mr. Ullman has done a very good job with his hero's story. He has allowed Tenzing's natural modesty and good nature to establish the balance of the narrative even in the face of events which might have made another man resentful and bitter. The British are not, where other races are concerned, the most tactful people in the world. Fortunately, Tenzing is a man who knows that the human spirit cannot really be insulted.

THE COLLABORATOR: For years James Ramsey Ullman, a New Yorker who rises six feet above sea level, has been the country's most devoted chronicler of the adventure of Everest, which rises 28,996 feet above Ullman. "High Conquest," his first book on mountaineering, appeared in 1941, and a number of others have since come out. Much of his surefooted knowledge of mountains is first hand; the highest he has ever gone is 17,887 feet to the top of Popocatepetl, in Mexico. However, he is incurably fond of daydreaming about climbing Everest. The closest he ever got to *its* top is Tenzing, who, with Edmund Hillary, did get to the top on May 29, 1953. Anyway, the other day Ullman, in his Manhattan apartment (eleventh floor), related the story of "Tiger of the Snows." "I came in strictly through the back door," he began. "Originally someone else was supposed to do it, and I'd've been happy just to write an introduction. But something developed, and one day in March 1954 I was invited to do the book itself. A lot of paper work had to be settled first, but I got so tired waiting around town that I left for Darjeeling on May 2, confident that Tenzing and I would speak the same language, that we'd get along. We did. Tenzing at first was shy about speaking in English, but toward the end he really opened up. By trial and error we finally arrived at a method which involved four people—besides Tenzing and myself Mr. Mitra, Tenzing's friend and assistant, and Mr. Gupta, the stenographer on loan from the Mayor. Sometimes there would be English, Nepali, and Sherpa going all at once, questions and answers being translated back and forth. Some of Tenzing's words would be taken down verbatim, some as notes. The notes read: 'Knowledge of outside world. Parents hadn't traveled. (Lhasa too expensive.) Had heard about them—Mallory and Irvine.' Altogether, I spent three weeks—six days a week, eight hours a day—with Tenzing at his home. I later spent a week with him in the Alps. By November the book was finished. *Tashi delai!* That's Sherpa for 'cheers'." —B. K.

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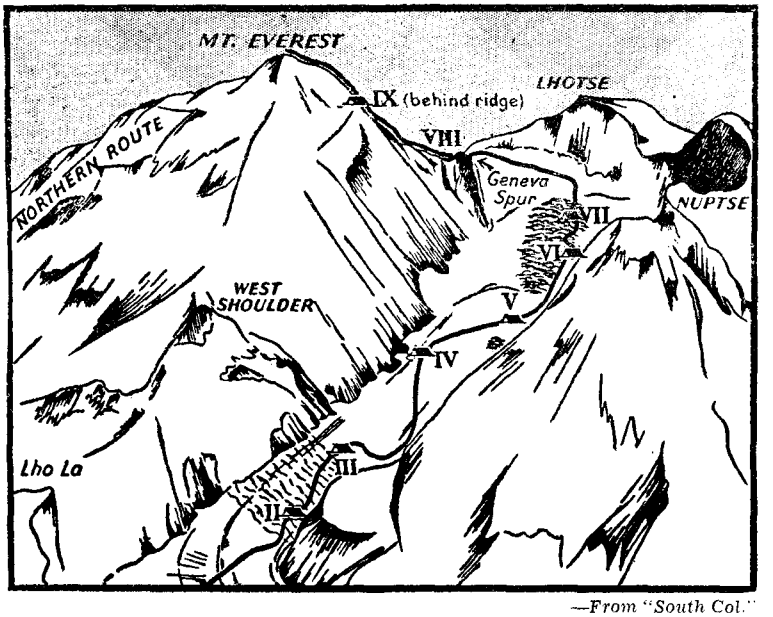

—From "South Col."

The route to the top—"uplift to the human spirit."

Pilgrimage Among the Peaks

"Tibetan Marches," by André Migot *(translated by Peter Fleming. E. P. Dutton. 255 pp. $5), is a French physician's report on eight months of wandering through western China, northeast Tibet, and north China. U.S. Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas, who reviews it here, has told of his own wanderings in "Beyond the High Himalayas" and other books.*

By William O. Douglas

ANDRÉ MIGOT is a French physician with an interest in the Buddhist religion of Tibet. For eight months—December 1946 to September 1947—he journeyed through western China, northeast Tibet, and north China, and he has written about it in "Tibetan Marches," a book just published in translation. He shines through its pages as a devout, idealistic, courageous person, with a sense of humor and a capacity to turn a phrase. There are many literary gems in his writing. Our doctor friend tells a good story; and he uses the fewest possible words to do it.

He flies from Hanoi to Kunming, Yunnan Province, China. He goes by road (mostly in dilapidated trucks) north through Sichang, Kangting, Chengtu, and Yaan in Szechwan Province, China. Then he turns west by trail (much of the way on foot) going through Kangting, Kantse, Teko, Jyekundo in Sikang Province, China. From the last place he surreptitiously heads across the Yangtze into Tibet and along the trail to the forbidden city of Lhasa. He has no visa; he must go disguised as a pilgrim, as a lama from Mongolia. He gets as far as Dzanag La, when he is turned back by the Tibetan police. After backtracking a bit, he travels north, eventually reaching Peiping.

To those who love the high, windblown reaches of Tibet this will be an exciting book. To those who have never traveled the region and felt its loneliness the book will open many new doors. There are faithful accounts of the practices of the forms of Buddhism which flourish in these remote recesses of the earth. The economy, superstitions, and regime of the peasants are casual but vivid accounts in this journal. There are descriptions of religious rites and services, unequaled by any I have read. A phase of the book of special interest is the account of the pressure of the Chinese population on Tibet and the introduction into the historic Tibetan provinces of Sikang and Tsinghai of Chinese authority, Chinese law, Chinese customs —and Chinese banditry. The author was robbed by Chinese bandits of everything he possessed, including his camera, medicine, money, books, revolver, blankets, coats, sweaters, and shoes. That was in the early stage of his journey. Near the end—out of Peiping—he was once more captured —this time by the Communists.

His journey was arduous by any standard. He crossed high, snowbound peaks in sandals. He slept in caves and lived on the humblest of Tibetan food. His only respite was in the monasteries, where he always received a welcome.

The book is a rambling travelogue. It is not as profound an account of this region as Sven Hedin gave of Tibet. Migot is a casual Marco Polo. But he has sharp eyes and he knows enough Tibetan and Chinese to get behind the façade to the real story. The result is a succinct, moving account of superb adventure which few ever have a chance to experience.

Ascent, Day by Day

THE EVEREST PARTY: Unlike most accounts of the ascent of Everest, Wilfred Noyce's **"South Col"** (William Sloane, $5) is an attempt to present the daily life of the rank-and-file climbers. This attempt is in general successful though the reader, mindful of certain frictions within the party, cannot escape the feeling that the author has been told by top brass what he may and what he may not say. Noyce himself was the first to reach that shoulder between Lhotse and Everest which is known as South Col, and he gives the reader a good picture of conditions within the huge party: the relays from camp to higher camp, the snow and ice, the food, the difficulty of sleeping at high altitude in unbearable cold and wind, and the hours of enforced idleness in what came to be known as "the Everest position"—flat on the back under a tent. He has also done a good job with his narrative. The reader feels that he, too, has been there and, it is impossible not to realize that no matter how impersonal and organized the party it is the spirit, the stamina, and the strength of men that produce results on great mountains.

One cannot, however, read this book in the light of the history of the struggle for Everest without feeling that the great mountain could have been climbed—given equal luck with the weather—by a small party of the type advocated by Tilman and Shipton, without oxygen and with considerably greater uplift to the human spirit. In fact, one cannot help having the feeling that in the not too distant future some small and private group of young men who are steeped in the traditions of great mountaineering will stand on the top of Everest without a tank of oxygen or a canister of soda-lime in sight, though not unmindful, it is true, of what they owe to the pathfinders who preceded them. —GILES HUBBARD.

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"Mediocrity" in Our Schools

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Ever since the end of World War II, as readers of* SR's *Annual Accent on Education issues have frequently been reminded, the schools have become one of the most keenly fought-over battlegrounds in American life. In P-TA meetings, in magazine articles, in books the question is raised and debated: Are our children being properly taught? One recent and widely read book that addresses itself to this question in spirited and partisan fashion is* **"The Diminished Mind"** *(Henry Regnery, $2.75), by Mortimer Smith, a retired Connecticut businessman.*

Because Mr. Smith's book is, to put it mildly, highly controversial SR *is adopting a special style for its review. Below you will find the contents of Mr. Smith's book described in a summary just as objective as we could make it. On the opposite page you will find opposing views of the book by two prominent educators. Mr. Smith's position is upheld by Arthur Bestor, professor of history at the University of Illinois, author of "Educational Wastelands" and of the forthcoming "The Restoration of Learning," to be published this fall. The case against Mr. Smith's book is presented by William Clark Trow, professor of educational psychology at the University of Michigan and author of "Getting Acquainted with Your School."*

In an early issue SR *will present a similar discussion of another controversial book, Rudolph Flesch's "Why Johnny Can't Read."*

The Book

MR. SMITH'S "The Diminished Mind" is subtitled "A Study of Planned Mediocrity in Our Public Schools," and its thesis is that the country's schools are stifling the development of the student as an individual and that, instead, they are concentrating on his development as an unthinking member of a group. The educators, according to Mr. Smith, insist that they are trying to teach modern children to cope with real life and to grow thereby. But, asks Mr. Smith, "Growth toward what?" and it is with this question that his book is chiefly concerned. "I think," he says, making liberal use of italics, "the *primary* function of the *school is to transmit the intellectual and cultural heritage and knowledge of the race, and in the process to teach young people to think and to buttress moral values.*" But, unfortunately, according to Mr. Smith, things are not going this way. He argues that, though "the personal pronouncements of leading educators and the ukases of their professional associations pay lip service to formal knowledge and the cultural tradition . . . their *practice* shows that this has been pushed to the periphery of educational aims while they are busy devising courses in trade skills, personal grooming, smoke abatement, and social adjustment." These new courses, he says, cannot take the place of intellectual and moral training.

Today, according to Mr. Smith, there are two fashionable theories of the purposes of education. One of these is known as the Life Adjustment movement; the other is known as the Social Reconstruction movement. Both, according to Mr. Smith, are bad. To advocates of the Life Adjustment movement, says Mr. Smith, the country's students are divided into three groups. The first of these groups consists of that 20 per cent who are mentally capable of meeting the requirements of college preparatory courses; the second consists of another 20 per cent who are able mentally to meet only the educational requirements of preparing for a vocation; and the third group consists of the remaining (and the largest) 60 per cent who, according to the Life Adjustment educators, are incapable of either of their fellow students' achievements. It is on this third group that the Life Adjustment movement, according to Mr. Smith, has focused all its educational philosophy. "The advocates of Life Adjustment," says Mr. Smith, "believe that . . . the best that can be done (with this 60 per cent) is to adjust them to their environments" —environments which, again according to Mr. Smith, are tending to be lowered more and more by the replacement of such basic subjects as reading, writing, and arithmetic with such ridiculous new (but supposedly practical) courses as "How to Have a Successful Date" and "A Group Study of the Cost of Corsages." Now unhappily, says Mr. Smith, this educational philosophy is coming into favor for all pupils, not just for those in the lower 60 per cent group. The brighter students have been forced to conform to the mass pattern and they have been denied the opportunity of learning to make their individual moral and ethical and intellectual judgments. Instead, the primary aim of each individual student has tended to be one of trying to adjust to the group. More unhappily, the colleges are beginning to sanction such an educational philosophy: in one state, according to Mr. Smith, 121 high schools and thirty-eight colleges have signed an agreement by which the colleges will "disregard the pattern of subjects of high-school graduates who are recommended for college entrance."

Though the purposes of the Life Adjustment movement are bad, those of the Social Reconstruction movement are even worse, according to Mr. Smith. The philosophy of this latter group—a group which Mr. Smith claims is still active though small in numbers—is based on an attempt to establish a "collectivist society" whose education would be molded by what the majority of people think it should be. In reality, Mr. Smith says, this works out to an education molded on what the majority of the advocates of Social Reconstruction want. As an extreme example of the ends to which this educational philosophy has gone, Mr. Smith cites the case of students who were given an examination in which they were marked down as "illiberals" if they denied that certain statements in the examination were true. Among the statements:

"What this country needs is more TVA's."

"Income taxes on the rich should be greatly increased."

"If European countries want to establish left-wing governments . . . we should support them."

Of such educational philosophies, Mr. Smith asks, "Are they democratic?" His answer: No. And he adds, the educators have got a stranglehold on American education—a stranglehold which has become so well organized that it can defame its critics as reactionaries or even Communists through the American press.

"The American public-school education," says Mr. Smith, in summing up, "will throw off the incubus of these two false philosophies by restoring the centrality of the individual in education. We must adopt again the idea that the purpose of education is the improvement of the individual and when we achieve this we can be assured that the quality of the group (in which the advocates of these two movements are so interested that they tend to exclude the individual) will rise and society will be sounder."

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Pro

By Arthur E. Bestor

THE time has certainly come for a fresh and disinterested appraisal by the public at large of American educational policy. During the past quarter century the schools have experienced the effects of depression, conscription, inflation, and cold war. They have faced rapidly expanding enrolment and major shifts of population. They have had to feel their way through a storm of conflicting ideologies: individualism *vs.* collectivism, pragmatism *vs.* neo-Thomism, isolationism *vs.* internationalism, and the rest. American educators have dealt with these problems and issues in a frankly empirical spirit. The American people have been willing that they should and have postponed the embarrassing questions about ultimate purposes and long-term consequences.

These questions, however, cannot permanently remain unasked. There is no such thing as experimentation unless there is some final evaluation of results. And evaluation is impossible unless we know clearly what our purposes are and ought to be. To define the purposes of public education is a public responsibility. It cannot be delegated to professional "experts" if the public schools are to remain under effective public control.

Mr. Smith is asking no return to the past, but he is demanding a school system that will face the intellectual problems of modern life instead of retreating from them into the infantilism of "Life Adjustment education." He rejects such programs as the latter not because they are "practical," but because they are the opposite. As he shrewdly observes, "A school program which teaches little beyond how to fix a fuse, drive a car, set the dinner table, and enhance your personal appearance *isn't useful enough* if your aim is the development of maturity and citizenship." (Italics mine.)

In his sober and thoughtful book Mortimer Smith recognizes, of course, that modifications of the curriculum must be made for the slow learner, but he insists "the revision needs to be in the direction of discovering new and better methods and techniques for reaching this group with the values of the cultural heritage." Any alternative plan, Mr. Smith points out, is at bottom anti-democratic. To shove the slow learner "into a variety of non-academic courses devoid of real content" is to treat him "as a second-class citizen of the educational world," doomed for the rest of his life "to intellectual and cultural subservience." He reminds us that the safety of society as a whole is involved: "If we expect the boy with an I.Q. of 90 to become a citizen and make the judgments required of a citizen we ought to be busy devising ways of making him understand the ideas which have shaped his country and world and we ought to be teaching him how to 'communicate' intelligibly."

That Mr. Smith is almost certain to be venomously denounced as an "enemy" of the public schools by certain professional educationists is sad but true. The concluding chapters of his book discuss the obstacles that lie in the path of educational reform. Greatest of these, in Mr. Smith's opinion—an opinion with which I concur—is the virtually uncontrolled power that professors of education exercise, in direct and indirect ways, over the nominally public educational system. That the inertia of such a great vested interest should stand in the way of educational improvement is natural enough. A sinister development of recent years is the ruthless use of this power to stifle criticism, to vilify critics, and to discredit any citizens' group that might take an independent position on school matters. The evidence of this is marshaled by Mr. Smith in a chapter entitled "Putting Parents in Their Place." It is one of the most impressive as well as one of the most frightening sections of the book.

Con

By William Clark Trow

THIS little book is another one of those attacks on the public-school program by its literary-minded critics. Even those who are inclined to share the author's point of view will no doubt regret that his expose adds little to what has gone before. Nor will careful readers be misled by the jacket-blurb writer into thinking that the book is "closely reasoned and well-documented."

If they do not read too hastily they will recognize the familiar campaign oratory, the exaggeration and distortion, of which the book is as full as a museum. Mr. Smith slides from *some* to *all* with the greatest of ease, attempts to make the unusual seem typical, misinterprets quotations and makes the worse appear the better reason if it gives support to his own view. He also enjoys playing with the two favorite animals of the literary critics: the scapegoat and the *bête noir*.

The scapegoat is the educational profession, on which he unloads a pitiful burden of acrimonious vituperation. And as an educational philosopher Mr. Smith's views are somewhat naive. He describes himself as a "traditional humanist," presumably because he favors "disciplined knowledge" (*sic*) and also "the discipline of the exposure to the cultural heritage." He gives no criteria for selection from this culture and to Spencer's famous question, "What knowledge is of most worth?" his easy answer, for stupid as well as bright pupils, is "real education . . . especially English and History."

The *bête noir* is the "Life Adjustment program," which, whatever its excesses, can hardly be accused of teaching any more useless information per school day than is to be found in the traditional curriculum. The British philosopher and mathematician Alfred North Whitehead expressed the concern of many when he wrote in "The Aims of Education and Other Essays": "There is only one subject-matter for education, and that is Life in all its manifestations. Instead of this single unity, we offer children—Algebra, from which nothing follows; Geometry, from which nothing follows; a couple of Languages, never mastered; and lastly, most dreary of all, Literature, represented by plays of Shakespeare, with philological notes and short analyses of plot and character to be in substance committed to memory. Can such a list be said to represent Life, as it is known in the midst of the living of it?" The effort of those to whom has been assigned the responsibility for running our schools is not resulting in a decrease but in an increase in the volume of pupil learning, Mr. Smith to the contrary notwithstanding. They are gradually succeeding in making the content less esoteric, more meaningful, and more visibly related to actual living. They are not "anti-intellectualistic." They recognize other values too, which they are striving to incorporate in the school program in order to develop the good individual in the good society.

If anyone is going to "deal a body blow to the stranglehold of the educationists," as Mr. Smith recommends, let us hope it will be dealt by someone who spends less time hunting through educational writings for statements that support his position and more in exploring the findings of research in education, mental hygiene, child development, and social psychology, from all of which stem many of the changes Mr. Smith so bitterly deplores.

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The Lukewarm Peace

THE main impression growing out of a recent trip to the crisis centers of the Far East is that a new phase in the world power struggle has opened. The Cold War seems to have passed; the period of the Lukewarm Peace now begins.

For the moment, at least, the danger of a cataclysmic military showdown has apparently receded. In its place, however, is emerging a new kind of showdown—just as important, just as demanding as the one just ended. It is a showdown for the majority. Communism aims to represent the preponderance of the world's peoples. It believes that it can put the United States in an impossible position by cutting us off from the bulk of the human race. Communism is anticipating the moment when it can ask America what we really mean by democracy, for it will call attention to its own position of leadership in speaking for the greatest good of the greatest number in the world itself.

In its quest of majority support Communism is not necessarily thinking in terms of direct political control. Indeed, such political control may now be unlikely. What Communism now seeks is wide acceptance for its leadership, especially in Asia and Africa. It hopes to do this by identifying itself with the things that are as important as life itself to the peoples of Asia and Africa. It realizes that the cause of Asia and Africa may well be the most powerful cause in history, involving as it does the struggle for freedom of nations and for self-respect of millions of individuals. That cause has been begging for an outside champion. Communism believes that role is hers for the asking. So far there are no other contenders.

The recent Asian-African Conference at Bandung was a dramatic display case both of Communism's new world strategy and America's possible unpreparedness for the non-military showdown coming up in the world. At Bandung, Premier Chou En-lai of Communist China seemed supremely aware that a shift in the thinking of 100,000,000 people would also mean a basic shift in the world's balance of power. He tied his own nation to the common historical experience of the Asian and African peoples in tearing themselves loose from the foreign masters. He knew that the momentum of almost 200 years was stronger than any current political issues and he put that momentum to work in his own behalf.

America's unpreparedness for a showdown on the battleground of world public opinion goes deeper than our official failure to assess correctly in advance the true strength of the free nations at Bandung. Washington's moves on the international chessboard cannot be considered apart from the attitudes, habits, and approaches of the country as a whole. Real preparedness begins with this question: How much do we as a people actually know about Asia and Africa?

The answer is not obtained by a simple division of Americans into internationalists and isolationists. The fact is that our lack of preparedness is evident even among those who accept our relationship to the rest of the world. Indeed, even in otherwise highly educated circles there is a serious shortage of working knowledge about the East. Except for a handful of colleges and universities higher education in America has never gone beyond what are largely empty generalizations about the majority of the world's peoples. There is no real depth in the comprehension of the diversity of Eastern cultures. We venerate what we call the 100 greatest books, but the titles that have the greatest meaning for more than 1,000,000,000 people are almost totally ignored.

IF A nation's language is the key to its culture, history, and outlook what do we expect to use instead of a key? Ninety-eight per cent of our foreign-language education has nothing to do with 70 per cent of the world's peoples. The spiritual beliefs of the majority seldom go beyond the survey courses. Little wonder that even among men with reputations as scholars or philosophers we find astonishing misconceptions about two-thirds of the rest of the world.

If our educational apparatus fails to provide basic preparation is it fair to place all blame on Government? We have training centers for foreign service to be sure, but these are more in the nature of a finishing school than the sources of long-range education in the vitals of foreign cultures. Thus, big decisions made on top Governmental levels about Asia and Africa are primarily concerned with strategy rather than history. Almost every day members of Congress have to pass upon measures concerned with peoples and places they have never seen and about which they have little real information.

The headlines and stories in our newspapers can stress the importance of what is happening in the East, but there is almost nothing in the way of historical background that can put the news in focus. Meanwhile we are up to our hips in the affairs of the Asian peoples, as is apparent from our involvement in the civil war in South Vietnam. We have committed ourselves to a certain result that will affect the lives of the citizens of that country, yet there is nothing but the vaguest comprehension in America of what the struggle in South Vietnam is all about.

The non-military showdown now impending will be fought not with propaganda slogans but with working knowledge and hard facts. What we know may in the end turn out to be more important than how fast we can fly or how many megatons of total destruction we can pack into a single bomb. —N. C.

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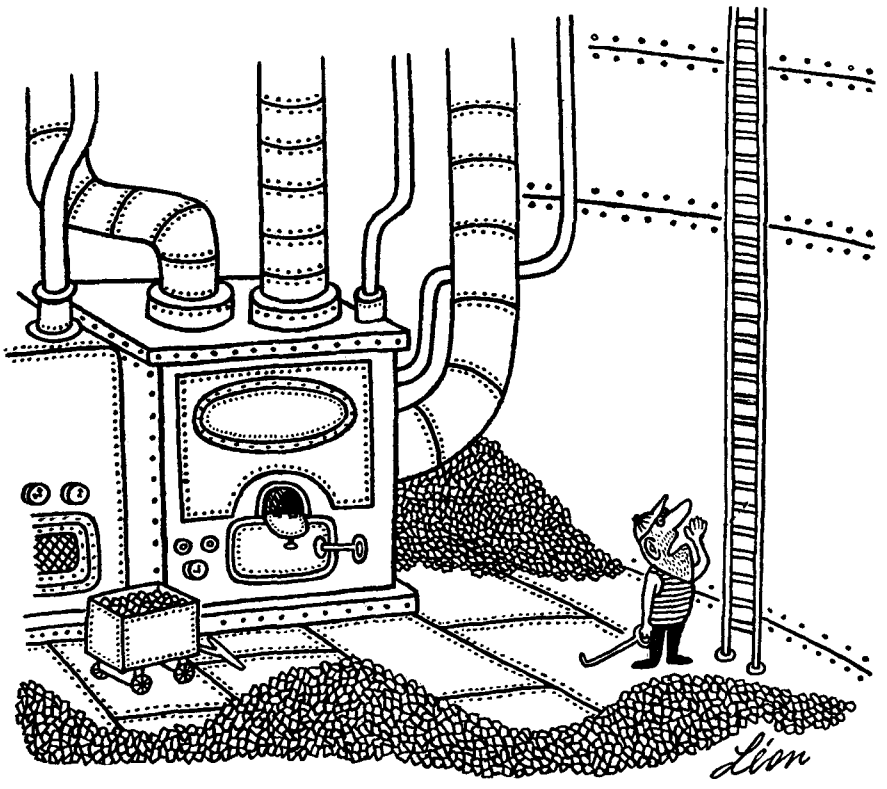
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RICHARDSON'S FOLLY

SELDOM HAS *SR* treated its readers to a more amazing "comedy of errors" than "The Day After We Land on Mars" [*SR* May 28]. It is hard to classify this article as comedy. It is equally difficult to regard the paper as serious writing; the writer, Dr. Robert S. Richardson, astronomer, has a most limited and warped grasp of the realities by which men live.

He declares, "In my opinion, the only valid reason for journeying to Mars is pure scientific investigation . . . For instance, we would like very much to know about magnetic conditions on Mars, or any planet for that matter . . . There are many other problems that would be crying for study. The difficulty would be in trying to decide which ones to do first. Whether the taxpayers would be willing to foot a bill of $10,000,000,000 to learn that the magnetic axis of Mars is inclined seven degrees to its axis of rotation is a question." Perhaps my imagination is in need of re-tooling, but that sum of money seems like "paying too much for your whistle." It may be a sporting idea to explore, as Dr. Richardson puts it, "what lies beyond one's horizon," but there is also the tragic folly of what is commonly known as "a gambler's choice." Looking about us in today's chaotic world, we don't need a telescope to bring 1,000 more pressing and challenging horizons into focus than cold space, horizons teeming with explosive factors and creative possibilities of unprecedented significance. It would seem the better part of wisdom to invest the $10,000,000,000, if it is to be expended anywhere, in resolving human tensions on Earth and in determining the right human equations by which we can hope to fulfil the destiny and dream of the ages. It would seem to be the height of folly to exchange such a king's ransom for some bits of desirable knowledge about magnetic conditions on Mars, or for a whole catalogue of scientific data, and in the process forfeit civilization as we now know it on Earth. What profit is it, if in gaining the whole universe, we lose the world in which we live and move and have our being?

There is a second, moral consideration. It is rooted in Dr. Richardson's argument that to colonize Mars it will be necessary to scrap the moral, sexual standards that now prevail in our so-called Christian civilization. He argues: "If space travel and colonization of the planets eventually become possible on a fairly large scale, it seems probable that we may be forced into first tolerating and finally openly accepting an attitude toward sex that is taboo in our present social framework. Can we expect men to work efficiently on Mars for five years without women? . . . To put it bluntly, may it not be necessary for the success of the project to send some nice girls to Mars at regular intervals to relieve tensions and promote morale?"



"Bert! Yer shavin' water's ready!"

Dr. Richardson made one pointed statement when he concluded his article by saying, "Is it not conceivable that in an entirely alien environment survival will produce among other things a sexual culture—shocking on earth—which would be entirely 'moral' judged by extraterrestrial standards?" What he proposes is not only "shocking" but utterly absurd. If he were not a scientist of obvious repute in scientific circles we would regard what he proposes as the immature day-dreaming of a high-school sophomore still wet behind the ears. What he proposes consigns him admirably into the category General Omar Bradley had in mind when he said we as a nation were in danger of becoming "nuclear giants and moral pigmies."

The point of all this is apparent if we go back in Dr. Richardson's article to where he discusses the "wherefore" of landing on Mars. He claims that "the biologist would seem to have the biggest stake in such a trip. If the *maria* consist of vegetation he would be in much the same situation as Galileo with his first telescope—wherever he looked he would be sure to make an important discovery . . . Biologists like to think of plant succession, photosynthesis, and natural selection as fundamental principles of life. But the fact remains that they have been studied only under the conditions that prevail on the Earth, and their universal nature can only be inferred. It would be a most striking piece of evidence if such fundamental principles were also found to hold true on Mars."

In a word, this astronomer is interested in the universality of natural law, and in his mind it would be worth the expenditure of $10,000,000,000 to send an expedition to Mars to be sure that natural laws such as prevail on Earth rule also on Mars and by that token everywhere else in the universe. But in the same breath, as it were, he concludes that such an expedition would be impossible without scrapping moral laws and, therefore, in order to validate the universality of physical law he wants to abandon and junk moral law.

Far be it from me to attempt to preach a sermon, but one cannot help wondering where we would come out, granting success to the Mars expedition with its junked moral standards and batch of "nice girls." Surely Dr. Richardson has been "around" sufficiently to know the absurdity of improving morale by debunking morality. One of the lessons as old as history is: "Where there is no morality the people perish." It would be well for scientists, especially Dr. Richardson, if resort were made more frequently and earnestly to the wisdom of the ages, particularly to the ancient Wise Man who said, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city," or maketh a landing on Mars.

JOHN W. MCKELVEY.

Lansdowne, Pa.

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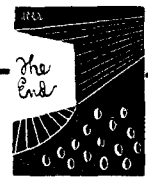

Faulkner in Pharaoh-Land

THERE are bound to be some raised eyebrows when the credits for **"Land of the Pharaohs"** (Warner Brothers) are flashed on the screen—or, more probably, after the lights come up and the picture is over. For the trio of writers responsible for this lusty, if unlikely, account of the building of the Great Pyramids in Egypt is headed by Nobel and Pulitzer Prizewinner William Faulkner. Mr. Faulkner, a slight, soft-spoken, sharp-eyed man, was in town recently to beat the drum for his film. "The leading lady is under contract to another studio, the director is already off on another picture, so I was elected," he said with a self-deprecating shrug. The director is Howard Hawks, for whom Faulkner has already written scripts on such films as "To Have and Have Not" and "The Big Sleep." The two men have been close friends, hunting and fishing companions, ever since Hawks brought Faulkner's short story "Turnabout" to the screen in 1932. "When I need money," Faulkner smiled, "I write to Howard. When he needs writing he writes to me."

For "Land of the Pharaohs" Hawks cabled. Faulkner met him in Paris, then went on to Italy with him, where the two hammered out the main story line within a few weeks. They were joined by Harry Kurnitz, a professional movie-writer, who took their story and blocked it into script form. "He understands footages and that sort of thing," Faulkner explained. "I just try to figure out what a character would be likely to do in a given situation." With the script outlined Faulkner and Kurnitz set to work on the individual scenes, leapfrogging each other in the writing, then blending their scenes together. Faulkner merely sketches in his dialogue, expecting Hawks and the actors to work it around to their liking on the set. Although he generally stays with a picture during the entire shooting to make whatever script changes may be required, the turbulent political events in Egypt delayed shooting on the film for six weeks and Faulkner was unable to remain. He still hasn't seen the picture (nor most of the other ones he has worked on), and the chances are he won't. "Movies and I don't agree chronologically," he says. "In Oxford there is one show at seven o'clock, and the town goes to bed at nine-thirty. It's not that I don't like the movies, but my life just isn't regulated that way." He speaks of himself as an "artisan" when it comes to movie-writing and states quite frankly that "it bears about the same relation to my books as letter-writing."

If this is somewhat unconventional drumbeating, it does help explain why "Land of the Pharaohs" emerges as the best CinemaScope spectacular to date. Faulkner knows Hawks's predilection for big action sequences and has supplied them in abundance, paring down dialogue to the essentials. The characterizations could hardly be described as deep, but they are clearly and logically developed. Story and situations are far from fresh—Joan Collins, the young and shapely wife of Pharaoh (Jack Hawkins), plots to seize his throne and treasure—but the pace never flags, the settings are lavish and handsome, the color photography incredibly beautiful.

* * *

Stanley Kramer, one of Hollywood's most courageous and intelligent film producers, generally makes it a point to bring something fresh and off-beat to the screen. He probably felt he was doing so again when he purchased Morton Thompson's unwieldy medical journal. **"Not As a Stranger"** (United Artists), and underlined throughout his script the moot point that "doctors are the only people who can kill without being hauled into a court of law."

But Kramer is too sophisticated, has too much innate good taste to work toward blatant sentimentality, to pull out all the stops and send his audiences off on an emotional jag. As a result, his film is full of soap-opera situations—the young intern who marries a girl he doesn't love so that he can continue his studies on her money, his subsequent affair with a small-town glamour girl while his poor wife's heart is breaking, the kindly old doctor who hides from the world his knowledge that he is dying of a heart condition. But Kramer has directed all of this with a documentarian's objectivity and with sensitivity. The result enhanced an all-star cast that includes Olivia de Havilland, Robert Mitchum, Frank Sinatra, Gloria Grahame, and Charles Bickford, is a kind of super-suds—the very finest consistency, but still soap.

—ARTHUR KNIGHT.

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TV AND RADIO

The Newfangled Broadcastmanship

IT IS a pleasure to report the emergence of a glimmer or two of light in the murky area of broadcasting policy. A minor event, which may be only tactical, was Zenith's request to the FCC for a ruling that no station could use more than 15 per cent of its time for any form of pay-TV (Zenith is trying to get time for its Phonovision).

The more significant move was made by Frank Stanton, president of CBS, with the announcement that the company would provide "funds . . . for the purpose of a comprehensive, impartial nationwide study of what the public wants from television." The moment a Committee was formed CBS would cease to participate; a list would be drawn up "of the most difficult, vexing, or perplexing questions on which public opinion . . . should be solicited as to the role of television in our society . . ." and these questions would be submitted to the public. CBS wants "to establish some systematic method of inviting the public to participate in shaping what we do. . . . Our industry must have help—positive and constructive help—from without. . . . Since nothing less than society itself is going to determine our . . . future aims, let society get in there and push . . ."

I submit that this is downright revolutionary, and the reader can prove it for himself by looking at the history of the past few years and trying to remember when the public was consulted about any far-reaching decisions. For instance, the decision to allow commercial sponsorship of all but thirty minutes of the entire process of electing a President, from pre-conventions through the Inauguration—I do not say the decision was right or wrong, I say it involved the essential ritual of American political life, and we weren't consulted. Stanton's network decided it wasn't good policy to carry the Army-McCarthy hearings during the day (because the other networks were doing so) and NBC decided not to carry them because not enough people were interested—we were not consulted. The decision to debase our reception-quality because the networks wanted to get money for their color experiments was perhaps of less social significance—but who was consulted? Who has been consulted on the prevalence of mayhem? Who has cared to ask us, systematically, to participate in what the broadcasters have been doing to us?

Note that what Stanton proposes is totally different from getting a rating on programs or asking for preferences, and it goes far beyond the usual questions which elicit the proper answers: What kind of programs would you like more of? Good music; etc. And the purpose is *not*, as he made clear, to justify broadcasters in offering routine programs or "persisting in a habit known to be bad merely because a majority of the public seems to have only mild opinions about it." Merely to give the public more of what it wants needs no such research. The study Stanton proposes "would serve as a catalyst to start the reaction of a true two-way communication between television and the great society it tries to serve, whereby society responds to television in terms deeper and more important than any popularity could ever reflect. . . . A passive society is death to television . . ."

THIS is more thoughtful stuff than broadcasting executives usually put out to their fellowmen at their annual conventions. It is also peculiarly tinged by the weakness of the entire business. If you will read the quotation above you will see that after saying "two-way communication" Stanton again cuts us, the public, off the air and says nothing whatever of the way television must respond to society in deeper terms. Nor does he say that a passive television is as fatal to society as the other way round.

Nevertheless, it is a beginning. One broadcaster has understood that to fulfil his legal obligation, to operate "in the public interest," he must consult the public as to its basic wants—which means as to his basic policies. I am not entirely sure that Stanton is aware of all these implications. He got involved in a dispute with John Crosby, who wickedly implied that Stanton wanted to set up a committee to predict the public's preferences or outline next year's program schedule. It was very funny and off the point, but Stanton's reply made me wonder whether either of them knew what had been said. The original statement was repeated—we aren't going to give the public more and more of the same thing merely because it's popular; then a kind of sleight-of-hand trick occurred and

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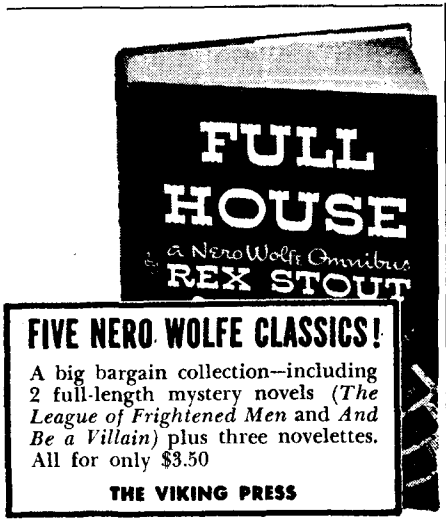
Stanton was saying, "Of course, if we discover that the public doesn't want prestige or educational programs we'll be glad to drop them like a shot." These are *not* his words, but what else am I to make of his statement that the broadcasters do not know "whether the public is receptive when it turns . . . to . . . 'straight enlightenment' . . . or do they regard the television set as a home entertainment center and resent . . . an intrusion of a teacher?" Surely with all the examples at his disposal, from murder to Lewis and Martin, it was odd of Stanton to choose Frank Baxter as an "intrusion."

What he has started is important and he is determined to go through with it, although I gather his reception was not unmixed. I put it to him that one of the "vexing, perplexing" questions is *how* the public comes to want what it wants, how it could come to want "Invitation to Learning," which has just been hailed for its longevity on the air, when only a handful of stations carried it? And I put it to him also that if the public cannot find the way to communicate with the broadcasters they themselves should set up the systematic method for getting the public on the air for the real $64,000,000 question—which is what the broadcasters ought to be doing.

These are not captious remarks. They testify to the importance of Stanton's proposals, which have a basic integrity not to be frittered away, I hope. His ideas come after a doleful period of network fumbling in public relations which ended in the spectacle of these vast beneficiaries of private enterprise asking the Government not to let a competing private enterprise come into being. From such intellectual inelegance Stanton's present proposals are free, and I can assure him of a fairly widespread welcome for them.

—GILBERT SELDES.



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THE VIKING PRESS

Truth, Terror and the Common Man

Continued from page 10

ishment. Someone else must kill that spider, crush that beetle. That is the end. Yet, here and there, something remains, stands out, that is redeeming or horrifying. There is Dr. Crippen's touching farewell letter to Miss Le Neve, the anemic typist who had been his mistress, and who had tried to fly with him to America in the disguise of a boy. That letter has a tenderness and a dignity which do not belong to the man who had killed his shrewish, would-be-opera-singer of a wife and had buried her body in the cellar of his house. It makes one think again, and see a better man than most of those whom we know. One regards what is now generally considered the mistaken conviction of Mrs. Thompson, and appalledly remembers the beastly details of her execution, when she was dragged, scarcely human any longer with terror, to the scaffold.

AND there is another British case which has an ending that is hard to face. This was the case of Mrs. Rattenbury, a sexually eager and ordinarily amiable woman whose young houseman lover murdered her husband in a fit of jealousy not far removed from that of Bywaters. Mrs. Rattenbury tried, with every means in her power, to assume the blame, so as to set her lover free. When she was unable to do so, and he had been sentenced to death, she was driven to an amazing suicide, in which she sat on the bank of a river and stabbed herself six times with a knife that she had bought for that purpose. Here, one recognizes a sudden access of dignity and intensity of suffering which resemble those of the great heroines of literature, and which shame one by their unexpectedness in what had seemed like a cheap and trashy woman. These are the things that stay with us, and which abash us.

And the other people in the cast, the lesser people, what becomes of them? They vanish, in their own way. When the principal characters move into eternity the smaller people recede back into a private life again, from which they were momentarily called. Is that life ever the same as it was before the murder happened? Does not the association with a murder mark one forever, change and modulate the whole quality of one's living, one's faith, one's belief in any kind of stability in the world? I long to meet these people, to ask them questions, to beg a description of what it feels like now when they look back to those days. Would the answer again be: "It was awful, awful"? All the participants in the Crippen trial, which is the first murder that I can remember, must be dead now. But at the time it happened Dr. Crippen's father, his murdered wife's stepfather, his own son by a previous marriage were all living in America. What were their feelings? How did Hawley Harvey Crippen seem to them, then? One day he was an amiable and remote member of their family. The next day he was not only news the world over, he had become a strange, a tragic, a majestic figure.

There is so much detail in the Crippen case. I would have liked to meet and talk to the Martinettis, walk-on parts both of them, but they were the last people ever to see Mrs. Crippen alive. I want to hear their own account, told not to the court but to me, of that final dinner party, and the row that Mrs. Crippen made when Dr. Crippen failed to show Mr. Martinetti the way to the lavatory. What did she say? There might be something in her words still that could open a door in my mind. There is Bruce Miller, too, who made some sort of love to Mrs. Crippen, and who went for the trial from America to London to clear himself of a question of whether or not she had eloped to his care. Had he ever made love to Mrs. Crippen, he was asked. He said: "I do not know that I ever put it in that way, but she always understood it in that way, I suppose." He denied any sexual relations with her. He said, "She was a married lady, and we will let it end at that." One hears the assumed and slightly mincing accents of the would-be gentleman, the man who knows one must never kiss and tell under any circumstances at all. If disbelief still sounds in my mind, and I remember better his letters ending with "Love and kisses to Brown Eyes," it is that which makes me wish I could see and talk to him,

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(THE) DREAM OF SUCCESS

Edison told Dreiser that he liked the process of working, but "when the invention is all done and is a success, I can't bear the sight of it. I haven't used a telephone in ten years, and I would go out of my way any day to miss an incandescent light."

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ask him questions—yes, even, if you like, make him drunk if I thought that that would open him up confidentially. Why, why do I want to know? If he confessed to immorality what good would it do me to know of it? I would want to know how it felt to have been the lover of a murdered woman. Did Mrs. Crippen seem any different in his memory after her death than she had seemed before? What was it all like for you? The answer can again be predicted.

THE family of Edith Thompson, how do they feel, knowing that their daughter, their sister, was executed? How much does the memory of her still come into their days, into their thoughts? Have they ever been able to explain her story to themselves? Can they accept life now as other people can? Is there any feeling that the same horror can crop up again, as though it were a kind of family disease? I would like to read—and if I cannot read it I would like to write—a whole book about the small-part people in these cases, follow them for the rest of their lives, asking questions of them. I know that it would not work, and I have a horrible suspicion, too, that a moment might well come, as it did to me in the Old Bailey, when my head would begin to nod and sleep start to steal on me. The answer is unreal, unreachable. The fact that those things happened does not change life. That one has to remember. It was a kind of accident, a bad but limited outbreak of some swift and hideous disease. My son, my daughter, was hanged. I thought I should never live through it. But I did. I have other sons, other daughters, I have the shopping to do, I saw a good movie last night. Those things go on. Of course, I remember her. What was he like? I liked him. Of course, I never thought he could do such a thing. It was awful, awful. But he did it. I suppose you could say I've gotten over it. One has to, doesn't one? One has to get over things, or die of them. Do I feel any different because it happened, and I was close to it? Well, not really, not in the long run, I suppose. Not if you really ask me.

I do ask them. They cannot tell me, they cannot tell me what I want to know. Words fail, images fail, even memory fails. If it happened to me, and I was asked to describe it, would I be able to do better than say "It was awful, awful," and not be faking what I was telling? I hope I would. I like to feel that the whole key and rhythm of my life had been altered forever. But it isn't apparently. You don't believe that? Well, nor do I. But it seems to be the truth.

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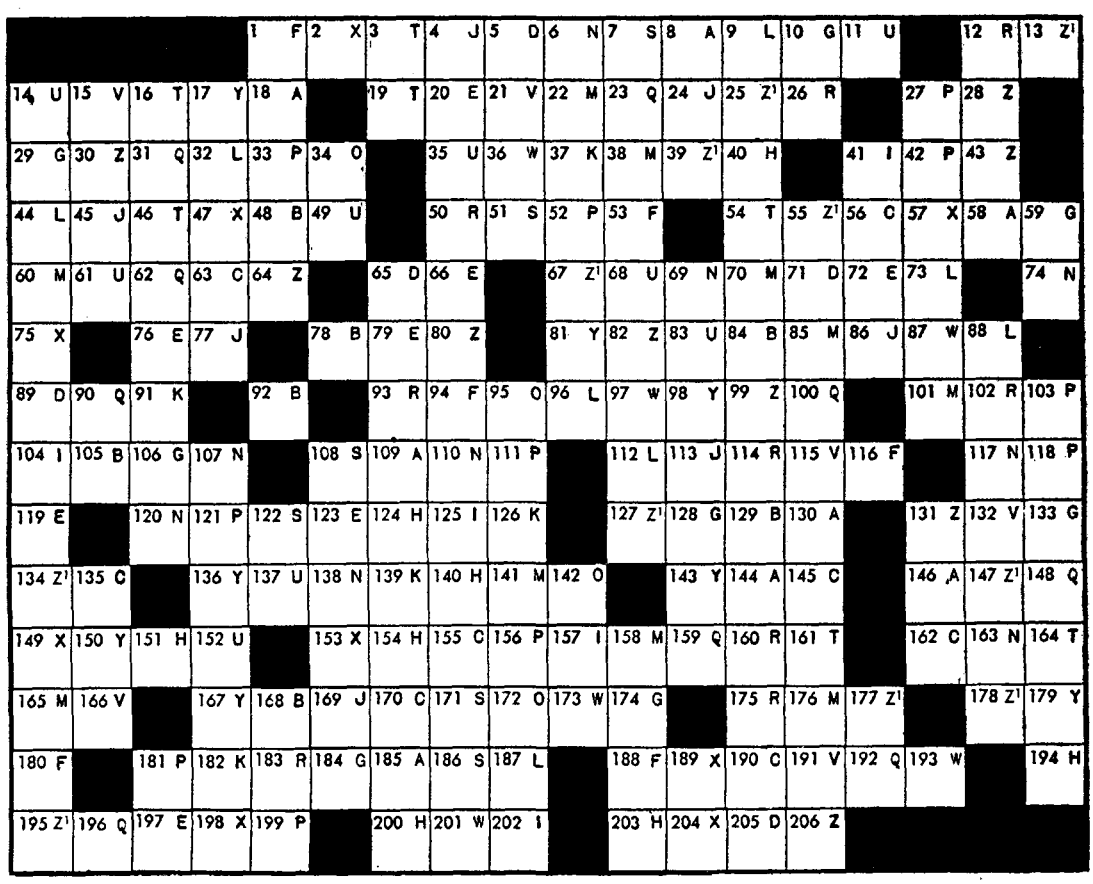
By Doris Nash Wortman

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
A. Political followers, esp. those with axes to grind.	109 130 8 146 144 185 58 18
B. Encircle or surround by alien territory.	84 78 168 48 92 129 105
C. Remaining as surplus.	190 63 56 162 170 155 145 135
D. One of Seven Gods of Happiness, asso. with fish *tai* (Jap.).	5 89 65 205 71
E. Publicly attest a document.	66 79 123 20 72 76 197 119
F. Light overgarment for protection against dirt—not weather.	1 94 116 53 180 188
G. Planetaria.	128 29 59 133 106 184 10 174
H. Whistlers.	40 124 203 194 140 154 200 151
I. Basic fabric of many a Word Z.	125 104 157 41 202
J. Give shape to.	4 113 77 169 86 45 24
K. Another nickname for "Taffy" in "Trilby," borrowed from an earlier novel.	139 91 126 37 182
L. Mushroom poisoning.	44 88 9 73 96 32 187 112
M. Unsuitableness.	165 176 60 101 70 22 141 38 85 158
N The internal ear.	69 110 120 138 6 74 107 117 163

DEFINITIONS	WORDS
O. Famous woman photographer of animals, recently deceased.	142 34 95 172
P. Storm, with high wind, which plagues New England coast.	199 27 121 111 118 156 33 52 103 181 42
Q. Transient approximation of the edges of a natural opening, as the eyelids.	196 62 31 100 90 192 148 23 159
R. Capacious vessel for beer; a billy; caramel; vingt-et-un; and some other things.	12 26 175 93 114 50 102 160 183
S. To be situated beyond a limit.	186 51 108 171 122 7
T. Resistance to attack.	54 164 3 161 19 46 16
U. "Sophomore" year at Annapolis.	49 137 68 61 35 11 14 152 83
V. Contort.	15 166 191 21 132 115
W. Rightful heir to the throne in Shakespeare's "King John."	201 173 87 193 97 36
X. Famous beauty of 14th cent. B.C.	149 189 57 198 153 75 2 47 204
Y. Another name for the "fox" shark.	143 81 98 17 167 179 150 136
Z. Familiar phenomenon of Spring fashions (2 wds.).	82 99 64 131 43 28 206 30 80
Z¹. De Quincey's word for pertaining to chariot driving.	177 55 39 147 195 13 127 25 178 134 67

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd WORDS, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. Alongside each definition, there is a row of dashes—one for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, write it on the dashes, and also write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. . . When the squares are all filled in, you will find that you have completed a quotation from some published work. If read up and down, the letters in the diagram have no meaning. . . Black squares indicate ends of words; if there is no black square at the right side of the diagram, the word carries over to the next line. . . When all the WORDS are filled in, their initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Of great help to the solver are this acrostic feature and the relative shapes of words in the diagram as they develop. Authority for spellings and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary, Second Edition.



Solution of last week's Double-Crostic will be found on page 26 of this issue.

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SR/ RECORDINGS SECTION

JUNE 25, 1955

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THE SINGING HORNS

By FREDERIC RAMSEY, JR.

This article carries foward part of a long program of study made possible by awards from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation. A series of on-the-spot recordings complementing the verbal text has just been issued by Folkways.

Jack Wimes, bass-horn of the Lapsey.

BRASS band playing has contributed so much to American music and to celebrations of Independence Day for so long a time that it should be no wonder that elements of a lusty tradition of brass survive in remote country areas. It is a matter of some wonder, however, that very little probing into the history of early Negro brass bands has been done. In many ways, the tradition of horn playing that grew up in these bands may have formed a principal ingredient of the first known forms of the new dance music that evolved in New Orleans, possibly in the 1890s, later known as jazz.

As early as 1838, when the *Daily Picayune* reported "There is a real mania in this city for horn and trumpet playing," there was a love of band music, and the horns that blew it, in New Orleans. Horns were also making themselves heard in small brass bands that blew out in the country. The Greene County, Alabama, *Gazette* of July 12, 1830, carries an account of a Fourth of July commemoration held in the countryside near Eutaw: "An excellent barbecue was prepared, of which it is supposed more than 500 persons partook." The observance at nearby "Greensborough" (Greensboro, Hale County) was illumined by several "Tunes" struck up by a band as each patriotic toast was delivered.

The *Gazette* ran a list of titles: the first selection played was "Hail, Columbia!"; this was followed by "Washington's March," "President's March," "Hail to the Heroes, Whose Triumphs Have Brightened," and a number of others. The "Star Spangled Banner" placed seventh on the list, and numbers twelve and thirteen, winding up what must have been a long, hot afternoon of memorable toasting, were "Toll Not the Bell of Death for Me" and "Haste to the Wedding."

Sixteen years later the notes of dedicated federalism and patriotism sounded at earlier observances of Independence Day had given way to a carefree atmosphere of celebration for celebration's sake. The Alabama *Whig* of July 7, 1859, reflects the change: "'The Fourth' was celebrated in various ways by our citizens. Some of them went to the Grand Barbecue at Candy's Landing, some to Boligee, some to McGeehee's above Springfield, some to a game and fish fry on the river, and the remainder passed the day as they best could. . . .

"Very early in the day the delegation to McGeehee's commenced moving in squads, with a four mule team in the rear carrying the Band of Music. 'Yankee Doodle,' 'Hail Columbia,' and 'Wait for the Wagon' 'caught it' as they left and we suppose all the way, as they left town playing them and came back doing the same thing. . . .

"The fish and game dinner was participated in by twelve or fifteen gentlemen, as many boys and twice as many Negroes. The company assembled on the river bank near an excellent spring, each one bearing Fish, Squirrels, Birds, Vegetables, and other provisions with 'sunthin' to wash it down,' and after cooking the dinner, we can say of our own personal knowledge, all hands 'eat into'

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the pile with astonishing voracity."

This account of a Fourth-of-July-with-Band-of-Music predates, by only six years, "the Surrender." Combined with the other reports, it establishes: existence of a strong band tradition; the presence of Negroes at celebrations; music played for "good times"; a patriotic repertory of white man's music.

The Negro side of the story begins with "the Surrender," and has had to be reconstructed from interviews with persons living in rural Southern counties. No accounts of music played by Negroes were published by county papers.

All persons interviewed concur on one point: the date of origin of Negro brass bands is always given as just "after Emancipation" (1863) or "after Surrender" (1865). The first bands were named after plantations where the Negroes had been slaves, after churches, or geographic place-names. Thus, one region in Alabama saw formation of the Lapsey Band (named for a plantation), the Old Oak Grove Band (for a church), and the Laneville Band, from Laneville. Of the many bands known long ago, only two survive: the Lapsey Band and the Laneville-Johnson Union Brass Band, made up of members of the old Laneville group, and the Johnson Band.

The essential point to be noted, in connection with all the Negro brass bands formed shortly after Emancipation, is that they played without instruction, and picked up their tunes by ear. The instruments played, then and now, are members of the saxhorn family. Of the saxhorn family, Willi Apel, in his "Harvard Dictionary of Music," concedes that "All agree that there is an inextricable confusion of nomenclature in this group." On one point, however, the "Harvard Dictionary" is firm. This relates to the family of brass horns: "A more characteristic feature of the family in question is the mouthpiece, which always has the shape of a cup, hence the name 'cupped-mouthpiece family.' . . . Even if this definition is rejected . . . the instruments in question must be defined as 'lip-vibrated aerophones,' i.e., wind instruments with which the lips of the players serve as reed."

The point is worth establishing, because the music played by members of these early plantation brass bands was based on *song*— they blew *singing horns*. Their repertoire came, not from the white man's stock of patriotic sheet music, but from Negro church and secular songs. From the church side, they played spirituals, jubilees, and possibly some early chants. From the everyday or secular life they adapted rags, reels, blues, work songs, and ballads.

"One can see a free, looselipped dance flowing along in the Second Line that follows a funeral in New Orleans today."

"Well, I tell you how it was," George Herod, retired leader of the Lapsey Band, recalled one hot afternoon in May as we sat in the courthouse square of Marion, Alabama, "take a man, when he would play music, he'll set down, if he hearin' 'bout a sing, a hymn. Well, after he got it prompt in his mind, then he'll pick up his horn. Then he'll try to play it, you see? That's the way it was. They first started playing spirituals . . . got them at the church. They go 'way back." . . . Later, the brass band musicians picked up secular tunes from "people who went through—hear a guitar fellow pickin' a guitar . . . he be pickin' reels. Us boys would catch that from it."

Herod named some of the tunes the Lapsey has played; he is sixty-four now, and he remembers hearing some of them as played by the band when he was ten years old. They were: "Move, Members, Move"; "Uncle Bud"; "They Had a Home in This Rock, Don't You See"; "Katy, I Got to Go"; "You Can Kick Me and Knock Me All Night Long, But Mama, Don't You Tear My Clothes"; "I'm Goin' Up the Country, Baby, Don't You Want to Go"; "Great Scott, Fell Out the Window This Morning Soon"; and "Luke and Mullen," a bad man's ballad.

In the days when every Fourth of July celebration called for a band, and there were many church and plantation groups, the musicians were competitive. They went out to their jobs on wagons, blasting all the way: "We be goin' this way, an' we run cross Hatchet's Band, and then we'd stand, and play different tunes. . . . We'd just have a good time when we run up on one another . . . one band would try to outplay the other."

"Anybody can hear us," Herod remarked, mingling past and present, "four an' five miles around . . . as clear . . . us can come in a place at two miles, five miles. Then somebody will say, 'I heard you at such and such a place.' Comin' up to the party, we'd strike up a piece, 'bout half a mile away from there. We'd hold that piece coming in till we got there. . . .

"At mornin', fo' day, when we be comin' back, peoples be standin' in their nightclothes . . . girls, child'ens . . . stand out, hearin' us come through. When we be comin' home at nights, we do that to keep from sittin' up there goin' to sleep. Lot o' times, boys set up there an' go to sleep, an' drop their instruments down . . . wagons would roll over 'em."

THE quality of *loudness* is so often used by persons of this region to describe music played by the country bands that a parallel immediately comes to mind; the way all the old people of New Orleans recall Buddy Bolden's cornet, and his band, as playing *loud*. One of the older musicians, Johnny St. Cyr, when interviewed in New Orleans by Dick Allen, mentioned another quality of the new New Orleans music as he first heard it: "Oliver, Keppard, Bolden, those fellows all featured a hoarse tone."

Admittedly, this report of Bolden's

(*Continued on page* 41)

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Plotkin *vs.* the Networks

By ROBERT LEWIS SHAYON

THE big story in broadcasting now —notwithstanding the furor over Subscription TV — is still Plotkin (Harry M.), until recently special counsel for the Democratic side of the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee. Lawyer Plotkin's one-man "memorandum" to the committee, released last February, reviewed present network practices and threw out "provocative" suggestions to Congress, to the Federal Communications Commission, and to the Department of Justice for Federal action to ameliorate the alleged duopoly of NBC and CBS in the television field. The Plotkin Memorandum was followed by a somewhat milder Progress Report, prepared by special counsel Robert F. Jones, bespeaking the Commerce Committee's minority Republican point of view. Subsequently the FCC majority had its reassuring say with a "things are not as bad as they may seem" inflection. And finally Commissioner Frieda Hennock, an unusual one-woman minority, in an April statement to the Magnuson Committee, vigorously criticized all three preceding reports and sounded the notes of urgency and alarm.

Add more recent bristling statements by network executives and you have a picture of major industry forces rolling out cobalt bombs for a decisive battle that has long been building. The Communications Act, which governs American broadcasting, was written twenty-one years ago. The FCC, empowered under the act to administer the broadcasting concept of the people's representatives in Congress, has been the stormchild of many tempests since. "Industry stooge" and "New Deal tyrant" are two disparate epithets that have been launched at it; inept, overworked, ambitious, overly-cautious are others.

During the Commission's seven-member wrestling with one mighty technological revolution after another, no peep has come from Congress clarifying ambiguities in the agency's grant of authority. As put by the Senate committee chairman, Warren C. Magnuson, in the covering letter which he sent with the Plotkin Memorandum to committee members: "No comprehensive study or analysis—no survey broad enough to appraise the developments in this (broadcasting) field during the past twenty years—has, to my knowledge, taken place during that time." The Eighty-Third Congress began such a probe: The Eighty-Fourth appears seriously determined, at long last, to have that fresh look at the modern facts of broadcasting life. The determination is backed by a Senate budget of $75,000 for the committee's study and staff. The magazine *Broadcasting Telecasting*, a leading radio-TV trade newsweekly, has declared editorially: "This is as good a time as any to ventilate the broadcasting house. Otherwise the day will only be postponed. . . . Mr. Plotkin may overextend and overdramatize, but there's smoke enough for Congress to call out the fire brigade."

Whether the "agonizing reappraisal" will eventually result in significant changes remains to be seen. The two lesser networks, the American Broadcasting Company and Dumont Television, have all to gain and nothing to lose from any future shake-up: currently theirs are only the lambs' slices of the TV pie. But the two leading networks, NBC and CBS, are likely to defend to the last decibel their present preferred positions. Dr. Frank Stanton, CBS president, has already stated: "CBS believes that many of the proposals of the Plotkin Memorandum, insofar as it deals with network television, are mistaken, impractical, and unwise. If these proposals were to be adopted, network television as it is known today would be gravely crippled, and the public's investment of $13.5 billion in receivers would be substantially depreciated."

Probably very little of the shooting will find its way into the daily press. The issues are complex, technical, and difficult even for experts to understand. They include the destiny of the new ultra-high-frequency channels (UHF), network time options, exclusivity arrangements between networks and affiliates, ownership of stations by networks, etc. Basically, the problem seems to be one of healthy competition and maximum diversity of operation vs. alleged artificial advantage (monopoly) and minimum diversity. Television still isn't pumping out enough programs over enough stations to serve all the nation. There are still areas in the country where viewers are limited to the programs of only one station, and in others two. With television the big business it has phenomenally become, you'd think the normal instincts of relatively free economy would soon plug up the gaps. But in 1948 the normal instincts were "frozen" by the FCC—all new TV construction was stopped—while fundamental engineering problems were solved.

Three-and-a-half years later, when the "freeze" was lifted and station building began again, there were (as Dumont puts it) "two strongly entrenched national television networks, and two relatively weak networks." CBS and NBC had most of the well-established VHF stations, and ABC and Dumont looked mainly to the new UHF channels to help them overtake the leaders. People who could see TV only if they bought UHF receivers bought them. People who were already seeing TV on VHF had less of an incentive to convert to UHF. Today the predominantly VHF networks have more money, more stars, bigger audiences. They flourish. UHF (mostly) withers. CBS explains its dominant position in terms of "the hardest kind of work, the most courageous kind of investment in plant, facilities, talent, and creative programming." Dumont, while graciously acknowledging "the fine ability" of NBS and CBS in taking "advantage of a situation which presented itself to them in 1948," asserts that the race would have been somewhat more equal if the FCC had opened up the UHF part of the spectrum when there were only 800,000 TV sets in the hands of receivers rather than 17 million. The argument is a fascinating drama in economic history with luck, shrewdness, and charges of "politics" quickening the plot. Its overtones are serious enough for the thoughtful viewer.

MONOPOLY is an ugly charge in a free society. Monopoly in the terms of the awesome influence upon men's minds to which television is fated is a burden which no enlightened management, however alert for success,

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would care to bear. The public has a right to expect fair hearing for the FCC and all the networks plus the wisest of deliberation and judgment by our elected representatives. While the forces play, the most immediate public issue is undoubtedly the UHF situation. Commissioner Hennock, in her minority statement, charges that 85 per cent of the total television spectrum (the UHF channels) is being "plowed under" by the continuing sale of VHF-only sets at the rate of over half-a-million a month. She urges that the Senate committee and the FCC "immediately initiate a national campaign to inform the public that they are purchasing sets that cannot tune into 85 per cent of television. Unless your Committee," she warns, "takes action to put a halt to the deluge of incompatible sets, the monopolistic pattern will take hold permanently and thereby thwart the Congressional objective of a nationwide competitive television system."

The Plotkin Memorandum contends that if UHF fails, "seventy out of eight-two channels assigned to television may be canceled out and many communities will be deprived of their only outlets and many more will be restricted to but one or two. If UHF fails, all hope for the creation of additional healthy networks must be largely abandoned and we must resign ourselves to the real possibility that two networks will continue to dominate the field. Finally, if UHF fails, 169 of the 252 assignments which have been reserved for educational use may be erased, thus crippling prospects for the use of television as a medium of public education."

UHF, obviously, should not be permitted to fail, if Mr. Plotkin is right. The sum of such failure would be waste on a tragic scale—waste of our vast national resources of information, opinion, education, and entertainment; waste of democracy's indispensable political, social, and economic element—diversity. The oil industry (no other industry is as fiercely individualistic) has almost wholly and voluntarily adopted intelligent restriction of its drilling practices not only because it abhors waste but also because it desires mutual protection of property rights. Fairly analogous, it would seem, is the decision faced by the broadcasting industry. Television is fast becoming the nation's most influential teacher. Our children need desperately to be taught attitudes and skills suited—not to the frontier, which is past—but to the contemporary horizons of husbandry. Let us hope that Congress, the FCC, and the broadcasters will, in this newer, liberal sense, show themselves truly conservative.

Kirkpatrick's Scarlatti

By FERNANDO VALENTI. *enthusiast. Yale graduate, and himself represented by numerous recordings of Scarlatti.*

COLUMBIA Records has at last released the long-awaited recording of "Sixty Sonatas by Domenico Scarlatti" in a performance by harpsichordist Ralph Kirkpatrick. The eight LP sides are generous, the presentation of the album positively luxurious, and the artist's selection of sonatas and "essercisi" comes as near to being a valid cross-section of the composer's enormous musical output as can reasonably be expected. The performances are just what anyone who heard Mr. Kirkpatrick play a Scarlatti "cycle" in New York last year would automatically expect; profoundly analytical, always sensitive and refined, fervent, and intense. Here is no rigid "tub-thumping" player who permits the inflexible medium of the harpsichord to seduce him into forsaking legato playing and into pounding the instrument as if it were a marble table-top; nor is it an artist who deflects the listener's attention from Scarlatti by attracting most of it to himself.

These performances show a tremendously erudite musical personality and a master keyboardist preserving the degree of anonymity necessary to bring to light one of the largest, richest, and most varied bodies of musical repertoire available on any instrument. Also, throughout the eight sides one never fails to sense that Kirkpatrick's "bag of tricks" is sufficiently inexhaustible to cope with Scarlatti's incredible variety of inspiration, a tribute to any interpreter. Consequently, at no time does he give the impression of being a mannerist with a series of stereotyped musical gestures from which he cannot depart. This is a broad and highly resourceful musician with a seemingly endless capacity to characterize each work, and one equipped to keep pace with Scarlatti's eccentricities of sound-effects and extra-harpsichord associations.

Regarding the matter of "registration," some may object to an occasional tendency to monochromaticism on the part of the artist. This may, insofar as it exists, suggest the purist, who, having explained in his copious album-notes that the harpsichords available to Scarlatti in his later years were equipped with only two eight-foot stops, refuses to avail himself of such resources of his modern instrument as might lessen authenticity and superimpose distortion. Be this as it may, there exists side by side with conscientiousness a highly fertile imagination, an enthusiasm which is hard to resist, and an overall sense of freedom.

Anyone who knows Kirkpatrick's playing would probably also have expected that his performances of slow movements, so difficult to declaim and make lyrical on a plucking instrument, would be among his highest achievements. As it happens, that is just the case. Take, for example, his reflective, tender, and poetic playing of Longo 427(K.402) or of the song-like Longo 238(K.208). This is harpsichord playing at its very best by an artist who never fails to hear within himself the idealized sound of the human voice. In a few of the fast virtuoso sonatas or *essercisi* there are those who might find Kirkpatrick lacking in the brilliance and sparkle which almost everyone associates with Scarlatti. I personally do not object to this although I think the artist's occasional tendency to rush a phrase off its feet just to show where it is going is a little jarring at times. I confess to having also observed, during my eight or nine complete hearings of these performances, an inclination to convey the illusion of "dotted" rhythmic motion where none exists in the text. If done consciously, this practice is very much sanctioned by eighteenth-century tradition, especially in French music, but somehow I do not hold with it

Kirkpatrick—"masterly keyboardist."

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much in Scarlatti. An example of this practice on the part of Kirkpatrick is in Longo 241 (K.54) on side 11.

As everyone knows, the vast majority of Scarlatti sonatas or *essercisi* are binary forms, that is, they are spatially (though not always musically) divided into two halves each of which is played twice. To some the Kirkpatrick-Columbia choice of where-to-make repeats and where-to-omit-them may seem a little arbitrary, especially since the artist has considerably altered the traditional conception of Scarlatti's architecture by suggestion that the majority of the sonatas were meant to be performed in pairs. It is obvious than Longo himself felt the need to group these pieces together in some sequence. He then chose to combine them into "suites," which cannot possibly have been the composer's intention and which arrangement, as far as I know, no one in recent times has ever observed. Some might feel, however, that the first record to appear in the LP field subscribing to this "pair-wise" arrangement should have done so a little more literally without the omission of any repeats whatsoever. Personally, although I occasionally felt one or two of the fast pieces to have gone by too quickly for a proper hearing and did not feel like re-setting the playing arm, I find that consistently repeating every one of the halves, especially in slower movements, can pall considerably, can deaden the hearing-apparatus after a while.

For the benefit of those un-nerving members of the listening audience who come to concerts equipped with a score of the music being played, I would like to remark that if some deviations from the Longo text are observable in Kirkpatrick's performances, no one in his right mind should take the word of the editor over that of the scholar-performer.

My familiarity with harpsichord sound and NOT my limited knowledge of recording techniques leads me to say that the sound of these records is very, very good indeed. It has for me the rarely attainable and invaluable virtue of not being "close-miked" so as to make the harpsichord sound like a power-lawnmower. I sense the "iron hand" of the artist in keeping his engineers in an acoustically eighteenth-century frame of mind!

The interesting and informative album-notes are largely excerpts from Kirkpatrick's "Domenico Scarlatti," a major contribution to the study of keyboard music of the eighteenth century. The combination of the records, the printed Schirmer edition edited by Kirkpatrick, and his biography of Scarlatti should prove irresistible to music lovers.

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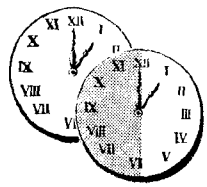

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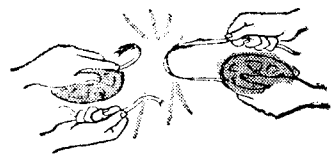

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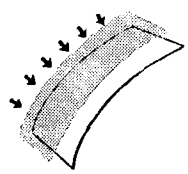

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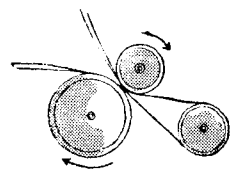

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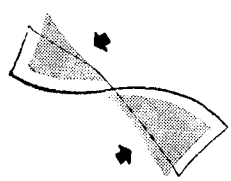

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TV in the Mail—II

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The following letters have been selected from those received since the second Subscription TV ballot was published* [SR *May 14*]. *They represent approval or disapproval in the proportion of the total number of letters received. They have, necessarily, been edited to conform to space limitations.*

PLEASE include this in the "protest department." I question the fairness of your poll. I can understand the reason *SR* readers may desire to pay for programs. However, I've just returned from the country, and there you will find a very different slant. . . .

EVA WHYTE.

New York, N. Y.

PLEASE, oh please, let us have either Subscription TV or TV under Government control like the BBC. Just so long as it is freed from the trashy advertising that threatens to make TV the public nuisance that radio has become. . . .

C. PROVOST.

Farmington, Conn.

THERE is a saturation point for passive entertainment in each individual. The price of overindulgence is boredom, regardless of the type or quality of entertainment. The saturation point in our family we know to be very low, therefore no TV in our house. . . .

ROSE SMART.

Deerfield, Ill.

YOUR invitation does give me an opportunity to recite at least one of my complaints. Commercials are too frequent, too lengthy, and oftener than not silly. I trade cars every four or five years or when my old one stops running. I trade refrigerators when the old one stops making ice cubes. Life is short and I can't see wasting mine in seeing over and over the commercials on gadgets for which I am not in the market. . . .

MRS. H. A. BROWNING.

Williamsburg, Ky.

IN THE long run, I fear, I shall go with the tide, install a subscription unit on my set when Subscription TV does come in, and pay the going rate for any special show I want to see.

SUE OTTINGER.

New York, N. Y.

I OWN a set which costs $350. That and the electrical bill is all I pay for entertainment . . . Look at what I have for nothing . . . No slot on my set! Sure there are bad TV programs, but the good ones are growing in proportion. As for irritating commercials, they don't irritate me. I don't listen. As a last resort I still have the moral and physical strength to operate the off switch and retire with a good book.

R. A. R.

Uniontown, Pa.

I COULD go on and on about the lost opportunities of radio and television. Neither one tries to educate the public in any cultural way. We learn only about better cars, better beer, better cigarettes . . . why not have better programs for a change . . . *Then* we'd pay, gladly . . .

E. LOWELL.

Gorham, Me.

BESIDES the extra cost it is the principle of the thing. It's fantastic that a group can get together and decide something for the American people without a by-your-leave . . . We are a free people and we must consider the "little people."

MRS. C. M. WOODERSON.

Norman, Okla.

THANKS for running the ballot again. I'm in a business that depends on advertising . . . I think that advertising-supported TV has an important place and probably will continue to be the most important factor in the business. But some form of Subscription TV should have a chance to succeed or fail on its merits. . . .

NEIL B. REYNOLDS.

Scotia, N. Y.

I AM against Subscription TV. I can't be sure that being charged for watching a program will necessarily mean the program is worth watching. Might be more kindly disposed to Subscription TV if there were reviews (similar to theatre reviews) published before the programs were offered to the public. . . .

ROSE GRANT.

Philadelphia, Pa.

LIVING in the Los Angeles metropolitan area, where concerts, plays, sports events are available, I prefer to attend "live" and would not pay to watch at home and miss the fun of being on the scene. I would, however, be willing to pay . . . for educational courses offered by Subscription TV.

DOROTHY L. NELSON.

Montrose, Calif.

SUBSCRIPTION TV, while it should be available to those who wish it, is as impractical for the general public as would be two editions of a newspaper: one selling for five cents with little news in it and another selling for a dollar with all the news. The principle of advertising is sound. I have worked in newspapers, radio, and TV thus far to the general satisfaction of everybody. Some day soon some sponsor may even be smart enough to realize that the simple words "This program is being brought to you by the Sudsy Dudsy Soap Company" would sell more soap and good will than a long and idiotic bunch of lies.

MRS. SAM RAGAN.

Raleigh, N. C.

THE most horrible part of TV today is the advertising. Occasionally you get a dignified, restrained ad that isn't objectionable, but in the main they seem to rub me the wrong way. . . .

BENJAMIN HARROW.

New York, N. Y.

I EAGERLY favor Subscription TV. The advertising on current programs is for the most part irritating and specious when not outright mendacious and offensive to one's intelligence. Its constant repetition and interruption of the programs is all but insufferable. Subscription TV will introduce a competition of merit to replace a competition of banality. I hope to see it soon.

ROLAND P. MACKAY, M.D.

Chicago, Ill.

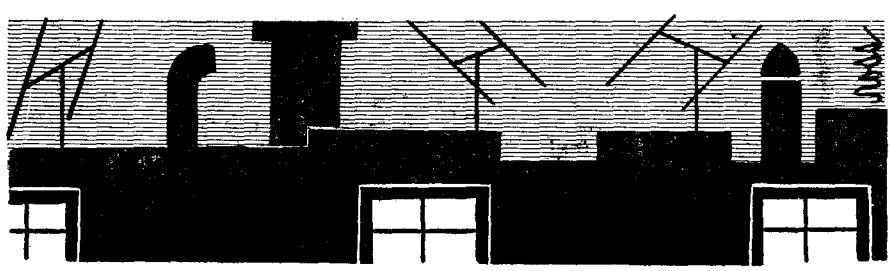
THE ARTICLES of Kolodin, and the many letters in favor of pay-television which have appeared in your magazine, all reveal one understandable but rather optimistice line of reasoning on the part of those who favor the payment plan: all such viewers are dissatisfied with the programs now available on sponsored television, they would pay to see better programs, and, therefore, they favor a pay-TV system under the theory that they would then be allowed to pay for something better than is now provided by sponsors. Under the pay-as-you-see television plan, they reason, the viewer, rather than the sponsor, would set the pace.

And, as they also conclude, the results could hardly be worse than those obtained at the present time by the present television setup. Thus, who are we spoilsports who refuse to give the pay plan a trial? If it fails, the situation can hardly grow worse.

But all such arguments miss one very important point. According to those who favor the pay plan, this system will permit much bigger budgets than can be supported by sponsors. A popular program might bring in two or three million dollars in one brief hour. Therefore, pay television will have higher budgets than sponsored television.

And therein lies the fallacy. The directors of pay-TV can reach millions with Gleason, "Dragnet," the World Series, and "Lucy." They can reach thousands with a symphonic concert or an opera. And, according to their supporters, they will have the money to afford any program they wish to put on. Does Mr. Kolodin seriously argue that they will prefer to produce educational or cultural shows to a more popular Lucy and Desi?

I predict that pay-TV will offer two advantages over sponsored television: shows will not include commercials, and shows will include current movies. As one who finds himself quite capable of ignoring commercials (much as I ignore water skiing when at a theatre) and equally capable of walking to a theatre to see the infrequent worthwhile movie, I find such gains trivial. But, as one who also



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considers the future of those citizens who now enjoy television's offerings but who could not pay for such shows, I consider the propagandist for pay-TV either blind or selfish. Read the polls, Mr. Kolodin. You will see a complete listing of the shows which most viewers like to watch. And you will also see a listing of just which shows will soon appear on pay-TV, if you have your way.

AL HORMEL.

New York, N. Y.

"SUBSCRIPTION TV would discriminate against those that can barely afford to keep a television set operating. Broadcasting should be open to all who want to receive it. It is morally wrong, especially in a democracy, to put a heavy price tag on cultural or any other kind of top-level entertainment. The best should be available to everybody."

The above, summarizing one of the only two arguments expressed in your selections from mail unfavorable to Subscription TV, is actually taken from three different letters.

Who is kidding whom? Do the letter writers mean what they say? How, and at whose cost, do they expect to remove the "heavy price tag" from "top level entertainment" plays, concerts, opera, musicals, hi-fi equipment?

I am in good health, thank God, reasonably well off, and live thirty-five minutes from midtown Manhattan. So, I can indulge my "expensive tastes." Does anybody sincerely believe that "free" television would venture to touch Broadway plays, classical concerts, and such? Or that the existence of Subscription TV would reduce the number of sponsors willing to pay for programs they believe have "mass appeal," so that they can drum their jingles into the listeners' heads? They'll continue to spend staggering sums on "free" programs.

And this is where Alfred "Whose-money-is-talking" Starr comes in. He multiplies the cost of the adapter ($50 to be invested by Zenith) with their optimistic estimate of 36,000,000 sets so adapted, and obtains a staggering sum to be paid for out of subscription receipts. Unfortunately, his slide-rule was turned into a one-way slide by his clients. Had he turned his slide-rule around, he might have found that if each owner of a set provided with adapter spent an average of $2 per week on subscription programs, all the adapters would be paid off and the sum of two billion dollars left over to provide entertainment, in the first year of operation.

This sounds like a darned good argument for Subscription TV to me.

E. H. LESSING.

Jersey City, N. J.

MRS. SUSAN A. LONG talks tommyrot in saying that Subscription TV tends to "discriminate unjustly . . . it should be open to all who want to receive it." She might just as well say that the theatres "tend to discriminate" because they charge admission.

If the "poor people" Mrs. Anton Linn talks about can go into debt for $200 to buy a television set, and think nothing about it, then I contend that they are: a. idiots for doing so in the first place (An idiot is one who has no money but nevertheless buys a TV set); b. fools for not realizing it. (A fool is one who thinks an idiot is not a fool).

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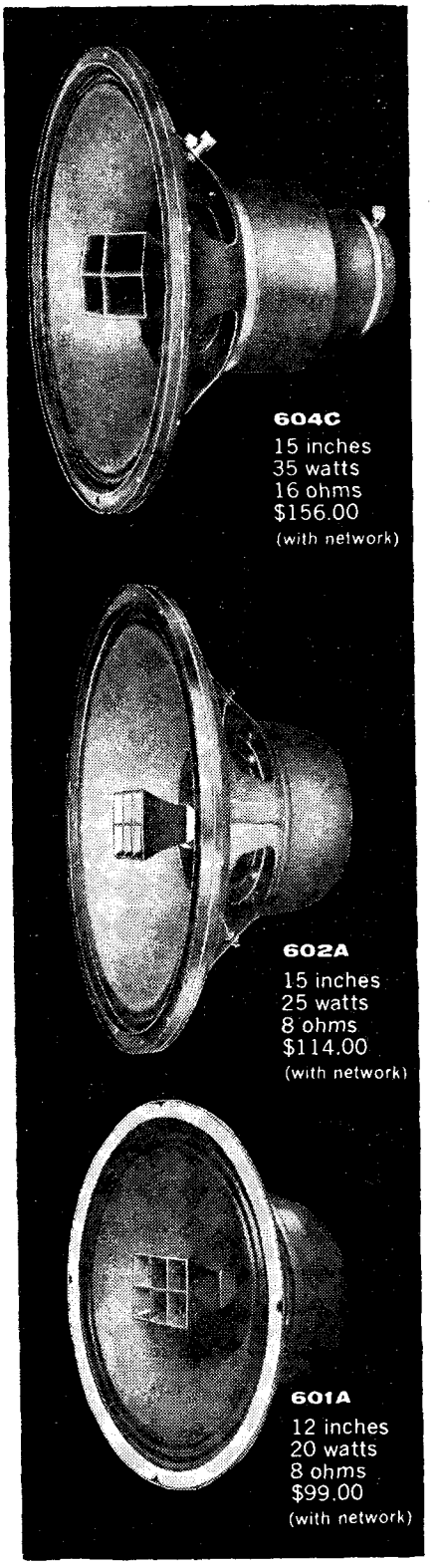

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Recordings in Review

Happy Schubert C Major

SCHUBERT: *Symphony No. 9 in C. Sir John Barbirolli conducting the Hallé Orchestra.* RCA Victor Bluebird LBC-1085, $2.98.

WHATEVER MAY betide John Barbirolli in his remaining years as a conductor, let it be said, from the evidence of this disc, that he has mastered a challenge that has eluded many of his most illustrious colleagues: ease and repose in the face of this simple but elusive score. This is a performance lacking, perhaps, the lengthy melodic formulations of Furtwaengler, the broad sweetness of Walter, or the insistent energy of Toscanini, but it has more energy than the Walter, more melodic sweep than the Toscanini, and a kind of sweetness that Furtwaengler, despite culture, misses.

What Barbirolli has accomplished, in company with his remarkably musical complement of players, is a statement of the score which is from first to last *musical,* in the way musicians use the term. There are no extraneous flights of fancy, no dwelling on inner voices or hidden meanings: merely a straightforward assertion of the compelling force in the work itself. I haven't heard the Hamilton Harty performance (with an earlier version of this same orchestra) for a long time; but it strikes me as closer to that cherishable ideal than most of the performances that have been available recently.

The price, of course, has no relationship to the virtue in the performance. As a recording, it is quite the equal of numerous other English offerings lately included on the HMV list, and it transcends the artistic values of most of those. The benefactor, in any case, is the buyer able to recognize quality when he hears it and ready to respond to a sovereign interpretation, with or without gaudy presentation.

The Voice of the Triangle

LISZT: *Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 1, 2, and 5. Hermann Scherchen conducting.* Westminster LAB-7003, $7.50.

IF A PARAPHRASE of the most famous literary source of all is permissible "The time of the singing of the birds is come, and the voice of the triangle is heard in the land." The birds who sing here are the high-fidelity cuckoos: they are less concerned with musical sense than they are with the exact inflection of the cuckoo's call, and not so much with the dynamic values of the triangle as with the fact that, to the unwary, that clear clang is auditory proof all the decibels are marching in military formation like the cigarettes in a famous ad of early TV.

We sympathize with Westminster's purpose, which is to produce a superior record; but it may be doubted that the way to do is to sever one piece (the Second Rhapsody) on separate record sides; to permit a distortion of balance in which, when the trombone choir enters later in that same piece, the strings disappear from sound; or to indulge some vulgarisms in the conducting of Scherchen which it is hardly thinkable he would permit himself if the purpose were not to create a "shocker."

I admire the technical capacities of C. G. McProud, editor of *Audio* magazine, but once he leaves the terrain of curves and decibels his booklet is sadly disserviceable to musical ends. To wit: "This arrangement is exciting throughout and is well adapted for a high-fidelity recording." Baloney! Balderdash! Blather! Let's get back on the beam, gentleman, and remember that high-fidelity begins with music, not vice versa.

As to the actual sounds themselves: I am not committed to the proposition that eight basses groaning in unison constitute a beautiful sound *per se.* We are repeatedly put upon to accept that thesis in the recording of Rhapsody No. 1, whereas any conductor knows—or at least hopes—that what the audience hears will be something more savory than so much air being roughly vibrated at point-blank range.

Fundamentally, our objection to this kind of gimmicking is the same as our objection to anything in which the parts are more conspicuous than the whole, the means more important than the end, and the packaging more impressive than the content. There is a short, crisp, non-flattering word for it: phoney.

Menotti for Violin

MENOTTI: *Concerto in A minor. Tossy Spivakovsky, violin, and the Boston Symphony conducted by Charles Munch.*

HONEGGER: *Symphony No. 2. Munch and the Boston Symphony.* RCA Victor LM-1868, $3.98.

IN A GRATEFUL reversal of commoner experience, Menotti's violin concerto continues to sound better and better since it was first heard in December 1952. The upswing began when Tossy Spivakovsky picked it up after the initial performances by Efrem Zimbalist, playing it in New York last spring with the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. Now this recording shows clearly that it is a work in Menotti's own vein, with a weakness here and there perhaps, but certainly playable and listenable.

What Spivakovsky provides for it is a nervous energy and physical vitality which are much in its character. (It was the lack of such drive and sparkle in the first performances that let the work down so sadly.) He also has a saliently singing tone, which means that it stands out from any background against which it is played. As Menotti has been especially considerate in writing an accompaniment rather than a counter-attraction in his scoring, the lines are clearly drawn at all times.

Munch is very much a master of the technical problems this score presents, as he is of the thewy Honegger work for strings which he introduced to America in 1946 and has repeatedly played since. It is certainly one of the most absorbing, musically rewarding works of a composer who has written his own considerable share of them, building to a state of affirmation (in the finale with its imposing trumpet solo) not too often achieved by any artist, whatever his mode of expression.

Both works are uncommonly well reproduced, with the kind and quantity of sound suitable to their individual textures. Considering the differing esthetics represented, and their probable appeal to diverse listeners, would it not be a service for RCA to couple Menotti's violin concerto with the "Sebastian" suite recently offered under Stokowski's direction (LM-1858), while joining the Honegger Symphony No. 5 (also directed by Munch on LM-1741) with this No. 2?

Gaîtè Gaborienne

ROSENTHAL: *"Offenbachiana." Manuel Rosenthal conducting the RIAS Symphony Orchestra.* Remington R-199-183, $1.98.

SINCE IT WAS apparently the idea of Don Gabor, president of Remington Records, that Manuel Rosenthal should create a sequel to his famous score for the ballet "Gaîté Parisienne," there seems no reason—other than unseemly modesty—that he should be denied credit for that refreshing thought. As in the earlier instance the source is the multitudinous creations of Jacques Levy, better known as Offenbach, from his birthplace on the Main.

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Manuel Rosenthal—"lively, racy."

There is, needless to say, an invariable peril in sequels, but if any man's work could supply the materials for such a one (not forgetting that Antal Dorati also combed the area well for his "Helen of Troy" and "Bluebeard's Wife" *mélanges*) it would necessarily be Offenbach. Moreover, not being bound by the script of a ballet, Rosenthal has permitted himself a free hand in achieving a kind of "symphonic synthesis" which deserves the name more than those to which Stokowski originally applied the term.

Finally, Rosenthal is now a much more ingenious orchestrator than he was in the Thirties—or perhaps it is merely that he has permitted himself all the latitude he had to forego when thinking of a traveling ballet troupe's orchestral problem. He has indulged in the luxury of re-orchestrating the famous excerpt from "Le Roi Carotte" known to thousands of vaudeville enthusiasts as the "Apache Dance," who were otherwise unaware that the composer of it, like that of the "Barcarolle," had a name, and that it was the same one. He has also woven the sumptuous waltz from "La Grande Duchesse de Gérolstein" into it, likewise any number of those snarly, biting tunes which are the epitome of what is racy about Offenbach.

In addition to putting all of this down on paper, Rosenthal has cajoled the RIAS orchestra into playing it like so many *boulevardiers,* as though it were the Champs Elysees around the corner from the studio, not the Kurfurstendam. Actually, it is the liveliest, most raucous—when appropriate—playing of an Offenbach score I have heard in a long time, and one which should prompt idea-man Gabor to put Rosenthal to work on a library of Offenbach operettas, *with* singers. —Irving Kolodin.

Opera Francaise

By HERBERT WEINSTOCK

DEBUSSY's "Pelléas et Mélisande" seldom meets with indifference. Those who react to its enchantment are likely to think it one of the greatest operas. Those immune to its spell find it either monochromatic and bland to the verge of boredom or too crepuscular and effete to like. In every sense it is an intensely personal work of art. Believing that when strong feelings are likely to be involved a reviewer should say where he stands, I confess that since first hearing Mary Garden as Mélisande I have regarded "Pelléas" as a towering masterpiece whose greatness I myself discovered. Like many others who fell in love with Garden, I have never seen or heard another entirely satisfactory Mélisande. Not having paid detailed attention to the several more or less complete recordings of "Pelléas" in the past, it is strictly on its own merits that I find the new recording (Epic SC-6003, $14.94) not merely satisfactory, but stirring and beautiful.

In Janine Micheau this "Pelléas et Mélisande" has a heroine whose sympathy for the role illuminates her singing, modulates the emotional colors of her voice, and creates a believable and touching character. The Pelléas of Camille Maurane, a pleasing tenor, is conceived and sung well, though I still prefer a baritone in this role. Michel Roux is entirely adequate to the depiction of the baffled, unhappy Golaud, and Xavier Depraz as Arkel utters memorably the most memorable lines in the Maeterlinck text: *"Si j'étais Dieu, j'aurais pitié du coeur des hommes . . ."* Rita Gorr excels as Geneviève, giving a truly impressive reading of Golaud's letter to Pelléas. Annik Simon sounds childlike and innocent as Yniold, who, for once, is not robbed of his scene with the sheep, almost always cut from American stagings of the opera. Jean Fournet conducts the Elizabeth Brasseur Choir and the Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux with authority—French authority, Debussyan authority. The recording gives a wonderful feeling of space and placement.

As "Pelléas" was Debussy's greatest single accomplishment, so "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges" was Ravel's most comprehensive. The new recording (London LL-1180, $4.98) is good. It would have seemed very good or even excellent if it had not had to compete with the older version (Columbia ML-4153), still—years after it was recorded in German-occupied Paris—one of the touchstones of its genre. In the new—and technically somewhat superior—version, for example, Flore Wend, though obviously a good and intelligent singer, never approaches the true fairy-tale Child created in the older recording by Nadine Sautereau. Similarly, Suzanne Danco as the Princess is flat and unprofitable if heard with the surpassing Martha Angelici in one's remembering ear. Astonishingly, though the new version has Ernest Ansermet conducting L'Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the deciding superiority of the older version lies in the sharper wit of the conducting of the Orchestre National by Ernest Bour.

AS AN easy lesson in matters of style, I recommend the comparison of two brief passages in these two recordings of "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges." The first is the hilarious outburst of Colette's mock-English beginning "How's your mug?" and leading to the Teacup's immortal "Chinese" lines: "Cas-ka-ra, harakiri, Sessue Hayakawa, Kek-ta fouhtuh d'mon Kaoua?" Ansermet treats the music as though this were really jazz; Bour knew it as a deformation of jazz for the sake of humor. The second passage is the virtuoso "Duo miaulé musicalement," the most amusing evocation of cats in all art. Ansermet's version hews to the notes and indications in the score; Bour's anatomizes cattiness.

Another second LP version is "The Pearl-Fishers" with the same conductor, chorus, and orchestra as in the "Pelléas," and with Pierrette Alarie as Leïla, Leopold Simoneau as Nadir, René Bianco as Zurga, and Xavier Depraz as Nourabad (Epic SC-6002, $9.96). The older version (Renaissance SX-205—three twelve-inch LPs as against Epic's two) had René Leibowitz conducting the "Paris Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra," with the four solo roles handled by Mattiwilda Dobbs, Enzo Seri, Jean Borthayre, and Lucien Mans. Except for some peculiar balancing of forces, every technical advantage is with the newer recording. Except for Simoneau's mannerism of approaching each very high note by one step, the voices are all better as voices. But Mattiwilda Dobbs has moments of reckless brilliance that seem beyond Alarie; Seri is a more convincing romantic lover than Simoneau; and Leibowitz brings much more light and shade to the score than Fournet.

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Recordings Reports: I: Orchestral LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Arnold: "English Dances." Sir Adrian Boult conducting the London Philharmonic Orchestra. L LD-9178, $2.98.	Excellent examples of Arnold's qualities as an orchestrator (he is best known here for his "Homage to the Queen" ballet score, in the Sadler's Wells repertory). The tunes have a folkish turn, but are original creations, their orchestration suggesting the influence of Milhaud. Bright performances, expertly reproduced.
Bartók: Concerto for Orchestra. Eugene Ormandy directing the Philadelphia Orchestra. Columbia ML-4973, $4.98.	Vigor and vitality are compelling traits of this performance, which is a brilliant demonstration of the color possibilities inherent in the orchestra, powerfully reproduced. There are, however, some expressive elements in the score which do not come off as well as in the Karajan version (Angel).
Beethoven: Symphony No. 7. Warwick Symphony Orchestra. Camden CAL-212, $1.98.	The long and honorable history of this Philadelphia-Stokowski performance (once identified as V Set-17) is all too clearly conveyed by the recording, muddier and more indistinct than even a bargain price can ameliorate. The good repute of the Camden catalogue is not well-served by this kind of thoughtless venture.
Brahms: Serenade in A. Carlo Zecchi conducting the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra. Epic LC-3116, $3.98.	This performance is substantially superior in sound to any other now available, a tribute as much to the excellence of the players—hardly the full Concertgebouw despite the contentions of the labeling—as to the skill of the engineers. Zecchi's direction is conscientious and carefully detailed, but the full measure of Brahmsian sentiment is not quite conveyed.
Chopin: Concerto No. 2 (F minor). Saint-Saëns: Concerto No. 4 (C minor). Alexander Brailowsky with the Boston Symphony Orchestra conducted by Charles Munch. RCA Victor LM-1871, $3.98.	Technical competence abounds in the playing of Brailowsky, and Munch's direction is knowing enough; what is wanting is some degree of real artistic impulse to convince one that this is more than a business transaction. Of the two, the Saint-Saëns strikes me as the more successful, though this may mean, merely, that the ear is more tolerant in its regard than where Chopin is concerned. Fairly good, not outstanding direction.
Dvorak: Symphony in E minor ("New World"). Rudolf Schwarz conducting the New Symphony of London. Capitol P-8308, $4.98.	In competition with Dorati, Ormandy, Kubelik, Szell, and Talich, not to mention Toscanini, Schwarz hardly provides more than a modicum of listening interest. For those who are curious, his is a careful, literal, moderately energetic, mostly unpersuasive effort. The recording is in the same "good, but not good enough" category as the performance.
Elgar: Concerto in B minor. Alfredo Campoli, violin, with Sir Adrian Boult and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. London LL-1168, $3.98.	Campoli has adroit command of the silky suavity to sing out the first movement of this work with its lovable tune, but the breadth and power wanted later on are not in his equipment. Boult is a little ponderous with the orchestral values provided by Elgar, though this is doubtless considered the authentic manner. Fine sound.
Gould: "Dance Variations." J. Whittemore-A. Lowe, duo-pianists, with Leopold Stokowski conducting the San Francisco Symphony. Menotti: "Sebastion." Stokowski conducting members of the NBC Symphony. RCA Victor LM-1858, $3.98.	Two excellent performances on the credit side of the Stokowski ledger, both highly attentive to detail and to the composer's purpose. The fine "Sebastian" score (with its anticipations of some thoughts prominent in "Amahl") is a pleasant contrast to the Gould, which makes highly agreeable use of the two-piano-orchestra medium. Both sides are successfully reproduced, though the points of origin are a continent apart.
Haydn: Symphonies No. 44 (E minor) and No. 85 (B flat). Paul Sacher conducting the Vienna Symphony. Epic LC-3059, $3.98.	Sturdy performances, in the new mode for Haydn, of two superior works in the composer's long catalogue. No. 44 ("Trauersymphonie") is an interesting instance of some impulses better-known in the "Farewell" (No. 45), showing Haydn to be absorbing even in paraphrase. No. 85 ("La Reine") is very well handled by Sacher. Big open sound.
Khatchaturian: Concerto. Thomas Magyar, violin, with Rudolf Moralt conducting the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. Epic LC-3080, $3.98.	Magyar may not have the super-sound of either Oistrakh (whose versions have had pre-eminence till now), but he has a decided sensitivity for this particular work, and a very persuasive way of delivering it. A violinist of mixed Hungarian-Dutch influences, he is obviously an artist of quality, who might be well worth hearing in other literature. Moralt directs forcefully and the recording is one of Epic's best.
Rachmaninoff: "Isle of the Dead." Dukas: "La Péri." Ernest Ansermet conducting the Conservatory Orchestra. London LL 1156, $3.98.	This is the first up-to-date recording of the Rachmaninoff tone poem, and on the whole, a satisfying one. Ansermet doesn't develop the dramatic atmosphere as compellingly as Koussevitzky did (his reissued treatment offers everything but suitable sound), but the musical texture is artfully conveyed. "La Péri" is even more to Ansermet's taste, and he manages it masterfully. More of the very good London sound.
Respighi: "Vetrate di Chiesa," "Feste Romane." Antal Dorati conducting the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. Mercury MG-50046, $4.98.	Respighi's "Church Windows" are not as familiar an arrangement of his orchestral clichés as "Feste Romane," relatively welcome on that basis. Actually, the interest in either of these is mostly electronic, for the music in "Feste Romane" has been better organized by Toscanini, and the "Church Windows" contains no great amount of it. The qualities of woodwinds and strings are particularly well realized in this instance of Mercury's engineering skill.
Saint-Saëns: Symphony No. 3 in C minor. Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony. RCA Victor LM-1874, $3.98.	Due to some alchemy not easy to explain, this performance from a broadcast of November 15, 1952, is a better likeness of Carnegie Hall sound than some NBC-Toscanini discs of later date from actual recording sessions. As a performance, it ranks high in the list of exceptional ones by Toscanini, especially in the "mystic" slow movement. The calm, controlled statement of the melody marks the difference between affecting and affected.
Strauss: "Till Eulenspiegel," "Don Juan." Weber: Overtures to "Der Freischuetz," "Euryanthe." Wilhelm Furtwaengler conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra. L HMV-19, $4.98.	A comprehensive statement by Furtwaengler on the subjects of Strauss, Richard and Weber, Carl Maria, wholeheartedly abetted by the Vienna Philharmonic. There are stretches of much beautiful playing in each of the works—also wilful phrasings, artificial changes of pace, strenuous accents, etc. The most consistently interesting performance is the "Don Juan," which has fine atmosphere and broad musical justice. My favored version would, however, still be the Toscanini. —I. K.

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Singing Horns

Continued from page 32

music is exasperating in the extreme to scholars who are seeking precise information. Yet it has the rugged persistence of a folk legend, and sometimes this persistence may be a way of trying to tell us something. Here is the legend in its classic form, as related by Bud Scott, another of the earlier New Orleans musicians: "Bolden would strip Lincoln Park of all the people by slipping his horn through the knothole in the fence and calling the children home. . . . Let me tell you, he was plenty powerful." (Bolden was playing at Johnson's Park.)

Loudness *per se* may not mean much; still, it is the one indication, firmly rooted in folk memory, of the first impact of the new music of New Orleans on its hearers. This new music, like its country cousin, was also based on a repertoire of spirituals, reels, ballads, blues, and work songs, played by Negro musicians handling brass band instruments for the first time.

It has been established that both the Negroes of New Orleans and this region of western Alabama had heard white brass bands playing European harmonies from sheet music. When they first heard *their own people* playing with hoarseness, a notable lack of harmony, and a high level of heterophony, it is possible that the "new music" struck them as "loud." A brass band, any brass band, can play only up to a certain decibel level of actual *loudness*; but the sound of "unfamiliar" music is so often described by auditors as "loud" that perhaps this frequent use of the word is our subtlest clue to emergence of a new way of playing. It may take us back to that fresh moment when the new music was first heard blown through the knothole of a fence in Johnson Park, or riding out across the Alabama countryside.

There seem to be enough points of similarity to suggest that the earliest, "roughest" band music played by Negroes in New Orleans may not have been wholly different from music of the country brass bands. The changes that took place, almost immediately, in New Orleans music, were away from the "roughness." But as far as we could determine, the "primitive" or "rough" style did not undergo changes in remote rural districts like those that nurtured the Lapsey and Laneville-Johnson Brass Bands.

OTHER parallels might tend to relate the music of country bands to the early bands of New Orleans, and they

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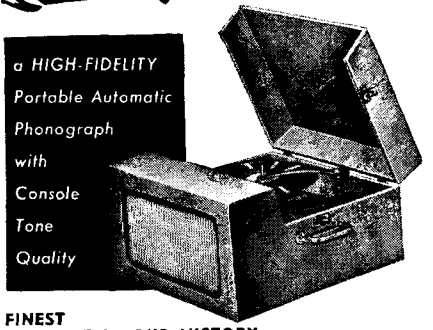

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Recordings Reports II: Miscellaneous LPs

WORK, PERFORMER, DATA	REPORT
Albeniz: "Iberia" 'Navarra," "Cantos de España." José Echaniz, piano. Westminster WAL 219, $11.90.	Echaniz has here engaged a task somewhat more complex and demanding than he can wholly manage. The pieces tend to be similar in accents and coloration, the piano tone hardly as sonorous or varied as it might be. Moreover, the execution is not always technically clean. (The collection covers volumes I-IV, whereas the Arrau on Columbia is incomplete.) The additional pieces are played in the same, less than wholly satisfactory, style.
Bach: Partita in D minor, Sonata in G minor. Nathan Milstein, violin. Capitol P 8298, $4.98.	Sturdy, well-phrased performances of the sort Milstein has often purveyed in the concert hall, a stamp of approval sufficient unto itself. The "Chaconne" of the D minor is especially absorbing, for its technical solidity and resolute musicality. The G minor is also beautifully formed. Fine sound.
Beethoven: Sonatas in A (opus 101) and E (Opus 109). Paul Badura-Skoda, piano. Westminster 5357, $5.95.	Two performances of high credit to the ever-developing artistry of Badura-Skoda, though it is quite conceivable he will feel his Beethoven differently in 1965 than now. Here he is most consistently persuasive in the E major sonata. The A major is strongly felt but not so consecutively thought where Beethoven demands understanding more than merely exposition. Good resonant piano sound.
Brahms: "Neue Liebeslieder Walzer," also six songs. Flore Wend, soprano, Nancy Waugh, mezzo, Hugues Cuenod, tenor, and Doda Conrad, bass, with Nadia Boulanger, Jean Françaix, piano. Decca DL 9650, $4.98.	These affectionate performances have all the virtues and some of the defects of the *Hausmusik* atmosphere associated with their composition. That is to say, the performers are sometimes stronger in enthusiasm than in proficiency. However, the "swing" in the music is strongly present, especially in the four-hand playing of Boulanger and Francaix. The additional items are "An die Heimat," "Der Abend," and "Fragen" (opus 64), "O Schöne Nacht," "Sehnsucht," and "Nächtens." Fairly good sound.
Brahms: Quartets in A minor and B flat. Vegh Quartet. London LL-1142, $3.98.	Sharply outlined, well-phrased performances, a little reticent in expression but otherwise of substantial artistic qualities. The players seem more concerned with playing for each other than for the listeners, which is acceptable enough when the over-hearing is so satisfactory. Finely balanced sound.
Caldara: "Come Raggio di Sol," Pergolesi: "La Passione," etc. Magda Laszlo, soprano with Franz Holetschek, piano. Westminster WL 5375, $5.95.	The thirteen items on two sides of this disc add to a choice introduction to the attractions of the early "arie antiche": the Italian literature of Bononcini, Carissimi, Durante, Scarlatti, Gasparini, not to mention Vivaldi and Pergolesi, which have lip but not throat service from most singers. Laszlo sings them intelligently enough and with real musicianship, not with the full emotionalism they demand. Holetschek is a capable associate.
Debussy: "Chansons de Bilitis," "Fêtes Galantes," etc. Nan Merriman, mezzo, with Gerald Moore, piano. Angel 35217, $4.98.	An admirable compliment to the recent disc of Spanish material by Merriman, showing the range and versatility of the singer's interpretative talents. Fine vocal sound throughout, and in such songs as "En sourdine," "Le Jet d'Eau," and "Clair de Lune," a superior kind of artistic awareness. The colorful, flexible piano playing of Moore fills another dimension of the whole. Side two provides Bachelet's "Chère Nuit," Fauré's "Ici-Bas!", and "Après un Rêve," Duparc's "Phidylé." Chausson's "Temps des Lilas," etc. Outstanding reproduction.
Debussy: Sonata for flute, viola, and harp. Julius Baker, flute, Lillian Fuchs, viola, and Laura Newell, harp. Roussel: Trio for flute, viola, and cello. Baker, L. Fuchs, and Harry Fuchs, cello. Decca *DL-9777*, $4.98.	A truly delectable serving of uncommon musical viands, topped in each instance by the silvery freshness of sound generated by Baker from his sometimes recalcitrant but here obedient instrument. In addition to the fine-sounding versions of the Debussy and Roussel works noted, he engages the solo challenge of Debussy's "Syrinx" and manages it supremely well. The scope and definition of the recording are very well suited to the material.
Dohnányi: Quartet No. 3 in A minor. Dvorak: Quartet in F ("American"). Hollywood Quartet. Capitol P-8307, $4.98.	The mingling of Smetana and Brahms in the Dohnányi score is very well-appraised by the Hollywood Quartet, which gives back a very sensitive, and on the whole vital, image of the musical values it contains. A decidedly welcome addition to the quartet literature on LP. The associated version of the Dvorak "American" is one of the best available. Superior sound in each instance, characterized by more than average concern for balance.
Fauré: "Nocturne" No. 12, "Barcarolle," "Valses-Caprice," etc. Ravel: "Valses Nobles et Sentimentales," etc. Jean-Michel Damase, piano. London TW 91035, $4.98.	Light-fingered, atmospheric pianism by the hitherto unfamiliar Damase, especially in the Fauré literature. The Ravel asks a little more, in color and nuance, than he provides, but he would appear to be an artist well above average quality. More of the Fauré literature, in which he shows himself to be unusually adept, would be welcome. Average good sound.
Fauré: Quintet No. 2. Gaby Casadesus, piano, with the Guilet String Quartet. MGM E 3166, $3.98.	A beautifully prepared, fully matured reading of this work, with excellent mechanical detail to balance the music sense. So much of it is so good that one must conclude, in those passages which do not make the clearest sense, that the composer has himself not quite succeeded in making his meaning clear. However, these passages are infrequent in a work which has much to offer to the chamber-music enthusiast.
Fauré: Sonata in A. Franck: Sonata in A. Joseph Fuchs, violin, with Artur Balsam, piano. Decca DL 9716, $4.98.	First-class examples of skilled chamber-music playing, especially in the balanced projection of the elements involved. All one might ask is a little more active statement of the poetry in the music, especially in the Franck, which is a little prosy. The Fauré, however, is neatly drawn, without being overdrawn. Excellent reproduction.
Haydn: Quartet in F minor (opus 20, No. 5). Schubert: Quartet in E flat (opus 125, No. 1) Vienna Philharmonic Quartet. Telefunken LGX 66034, $4.98.	Despite the impressive name, this is no more than adequate chamber-music playing, stylistically, and less than that in fidelity to the printed score. Intonation is not consistently exact, some *portamenti* (especially in the Schubert) more deliberate (almost smeary) than good taste decrees. Acceptable sound.
Haydn: Sonata in F (No. 23). Mozart: Sonata in D (K.576) Géza Anda, piano. Teltfunken TM 68023, $4.98.	Anda's feeling for the romantic literature as exemplified in recent Angel recordings is not paralleled in these neat but essentially colorless performances. All the notes are in the right places, but the air space between them, the accents that make for interpretative sense, are almost mechanically rigid and unvarying. No plus in the piano sound, either. —I. K.

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should be reported, yet without insistence that we are trying to draw up a musical equation. There is the obvious one of instrumentation; the saxhorn family predominated in many New Orleans bands. It has already been shown that the repertoire—which reflects a turning away from white man's music to songs of Negro worship, and to secular song—resembles that of New Orleans.

The music of both country and city Negro brass bands certainly flows side by side at another point—its relationship to dancing. From the beginning, both in New Orleans and Alabama, audiences have responded physically, and with more than polite foot-tapping or courtly "dancing on the green," as with white celebrants of band music. One can see a free, loose-hipped dance flowing along in the Second Line that follows a funeral band in New Orleans today; and its counterpart can be seen when the Lapsey or Laneville-Johnson play for Negro audiences in Alabama. The rhythm set up by these bands is not a tight, regular march step. It is more of a fluid, anticipatory emphasis and counter-emphasis, ideally suited to movement of the whole body. Negro brass bands indulge in a minimum of "concertizing" in the grand manner: "Some people plays by notes," George Herod explained, "and they can't jump by them notes. . . . We'll hit a piece, an' anybody can jump. . . ."

In New Orleans, the bands have played, traditionally, for festive occasions. and for funerals, which in that city constitute a unique festivity. In Alabama, they do not play for funerals, but the "good time" tradition is strong: they are on hand for all barbecues, picnics, parties, night dances, and baseball games. Both the Lapsey and the Laneville-Johnson bands were hired, traditionally, for the protracted, out-of-door functions known in their region as "The Twelve Links" (or "Twelve Lengths"). Locally, different explanations are given for the phrase. Some say that, originally, twelve elders of the church (they do not specify any sect, possibly because the celebration was interdenominational) formed a sort of club, taking its name from the Last Supper served to the Twelve Apostles. Others say the "Links" ("Lengths" are pronounced "Links") refer to the long distance celebrants had to travel—on foot, on muleback, and in wagons—to get to these functions. Still another version is that the "Twelve Lengths" refers to twelve long, rough board tables set up on trestles under the trees.

"Twelve Links" picnics are held on the Fourth of July. Sometimes, the frolic takes in days before and after the official holiday. This probably makes confusion over the meaning of the "Twelve Links" complete, as there is some historical basis for assuming that the origin of the phrase could have been either religious or patriotic. Governing church bodies of twelve are known officially to at least one sect, the Mormons, who at one time split off into a faction known as "The Twelveites." Against this is the original report of the Declaration of Independence having been adopted "by the authority of the Twelve United Colonies dwelling upon this island of America." A strong probability is that the occasion, with the sympathetic number twelve, provides joyous outlet for a number of fervors. For regardless of the number of tables, participating elders, colonies involved, or miles traveled, the band was always there to play before and after Independence Day for the "Twelve Links," and it always played from 9 a.m. till dawn of the following day.

There were country brass bands in the parishes surrounding New Orleans, and many Louisiana musicians have recollected that they first blew horns as members of these organizations. Charlie Love, a cornetist now living in Algiers, recalls the Caddo Band from the Shreveport area where he was born. This band made a cylinder recording in 1913, but it is probably lost. Fred Landry, Sr., trombone player of Donaldsonville, not only gave an account of the early days of the Claiborne Williams Band, but he remembered that at Mardi Gras, all the little bands for miles around picked up and went in to swell the parades in New Orleans. He also remembers hearing the Bolden Band coming out to play on excursions that stopped at Donaldsonville, in the same bayou countryside that saw the birth of King Oliver.

There was a band that played for dancing at Angola Plantation, long before this rich delta bottomland became the Louisiana State Penitentiary where Leadbelly, among others, served a long term. According to Louis Bonner of Angola, who heard this band, it consisted of about seven "regulars." These included a tuba, French horn, trombone, clarinet, fiddle, and mandolin. This was before 1900. They "used to play it and sing it." They sang "blues, spirituals, reels . . . the church people would sit there and laugh at 'em when they played

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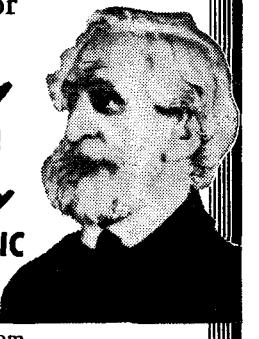

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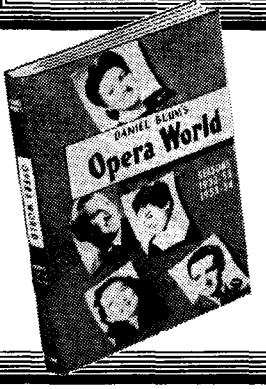

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blues. That didn't bother they 'ligion."

It is of some interest that a Bolden family lived in this countryside near Tunica, and that certain members of that family emigrated to New Orleans. It has not been possible to establish an exact date, or names of the Boldens who moved. It does seem likely, from interviews conducted in New Orleans, that Buddy Bolden's family may have come into this city from an outlying district; but until there is more proof, these shreds of data will have to pass as unrelated.

In all these places, we asked if any of the brass bands were still playing. There was always a sad smile, and a shake of the head. "No, they done broke up long ago. That's the *old* times." But one day, our question drew a different kind of smile. We were sitting on the porch steps of a cabin not far from Webb's Interest, a country-store crossroads between Marion and Greensboro. "Yes," Dora Williams replied, "they had a band out here for a party one night last summer. I didn't go, but I could hear 'em, even from 'way down the road. I sat on the porch, and listened. Whenever they get to puttin' into them horns, it sounds so good. That was the Lapsey boys."

It took more than a month to find the Lapsey Boys and in the meantime. Cliff, who is cook and *maître d'hotel* of a log-cabin barbecue run by Billy Grant called "Over the Hill" out of Newbern, Alabama, told us about the Laneville-Johnson boys. Cliff took me over the clay roads and rutted field lanes that twist through the back country around Faunsdale and Laneville and one by one, we persuaded the men to pull out their battered horns and play in a Band of Music.

When the tapes were played back for the musicians on that night when we finally managed a recording, the feeling implicit in the music was put into motion: the alto horn player danced, in a circle formed by the bandsmen, as the monitor speaker fed back each selection. Recordings made on that evening, and on the following Saturday when the Lapsey Band played, may sound strange to trained or "sophisticated" ears. Against this strangeness, it is only fair to report that the music is played with genuine feeling by the men who make it, and that its sounds are intelligible to the audience for which it is intended.

It is a dance music, sung by horns, blown by men who know no written music. It originated in the countryside, as part of blaring, blustering, outdoor celebrations of Independence Day. Its song and rhythm can tell us about a music that was groping its way long before the word "jazz" ever blew into our national vocabulary.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE MODERNS

Chavez on Hi-Fi

THE appearance all at once of three new versions of the Chavez "Toccata for Percussion Instruments" (which has already been available for some two years under the Boston imprint) is no mere coincidence but a symptom of the alarming growth of the hi-fi thinking that views musical qualities and relations as by-products or vehicles of faithful reproduction. One of the three new LPs (Capitol P-8299) frankly addresses itself on its sleeve to "High-Fidelity Enthusiasts" in particular and seeks to impress them with the "special challenge" faced in achieving utmost "technique and finesse" with the difficult medium of percussive sound. Now, it is my impression that there have been many superb instances of immaculate reproduction of percussion, and I have even on occasion gone to my door to usher in an unexpected visitor at the instigation of a triangle trill that sounded like the bell. In the early days of LP Varese's "Ionisation," which is scored for a much larger percussion ensemble than the Chavez, became unwittingly a demonstration piece for those who listened from the acoustical standpoint, and since that time almost every release of a contemporary work with prominent percussion solos has been hailed as an acoustical phenomenon that must be called to the attention (I guess I too have been guilty of doing so on occasion) of hi-fi listeners. Yet we have still to hear a wholly convincing sound of a first violin section of the orchestra emanating from a loudspeaker. Piano or chorus, furthermore, or massed sonority of chorus with orchestra, or an occasional dense modern orchestral tutti (in which percussion may be one of many elements) still presents considerably more challenge than the rather sparse chamber percussion ensembles so fascinating to the hi-fi crowd (though this fascination has, I admit, provided encouragement for recording several contemporary works for odd combinations—this one included—that we should not normally have had the opportunity of hearing otherwise).

What, I wonder, would Capitol do in the line of high fidelity with such a work as the Chavez Symphony for Strings? The fuzzy string sound in Bartók's "Music for String Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta" on the reverse side of the Capitol LP is far from encouraging in this regard, but in all fairness it should be pointed out to the listener that this is a repressing of the old Harold Byrns version. Or, if we are to have percussion (and there is no denying its charm as a relief from the standard works now and then), why does not some enterprising company tackle this medium in the tricky combination with chorus, as in the excerpts from Milhaud's "Oresteia," which were among the gems of the 78-rpm era and are woefully missing from the LP catalogue? This, alas, would have been more fruitful than so much duplication of Chavez.

It should not be at all surprising if my tally of the relative merits of the four extant LPs of the Chavez Toccata is very different from that of the reviewers who approach them at hi-fi experiments. Too many things are to be considered: balance, which depends not only on relative loudness of the instruments but also on their placement in relation to the microphone; attack, which is contingent on the player's ability as well as the conductor's monitoring; timbre, which may be a matter of taste; the promptness with which the lingering resonance is muffled, and the usual factors of tempo and expression.

The best all-around results seem to my ears to have been achieved in the last movement of the version under the dynamic leadership of Izler Solomon (M-G-M E3155). Here the admirable sharpness of reproduction that prevails throughout the work is wedded with expert execution. The tentative entrances of the glockenspiel in the slow (the middle) movement are a pity, but on the whole this version stands out. The Capitol LP will, I suspect, please the hi-fi experts least, but with adjustment of the dials (including addition of more volume than the others require) the painstaking performance directed by Felix Slatkin is capable of striking the discriminating musical listener very favorably indeed. It is notable for its articulation and its easy yet precise beat. Urania offers us warm, rich sound that is not quite in character with the wiry music (LP-7144). The performance under Milton Forstat's direction has a number of things to recommend it, but the disproportionate loudness of the glockenspiel in the slow movement and the slow pacing of the last are two rather

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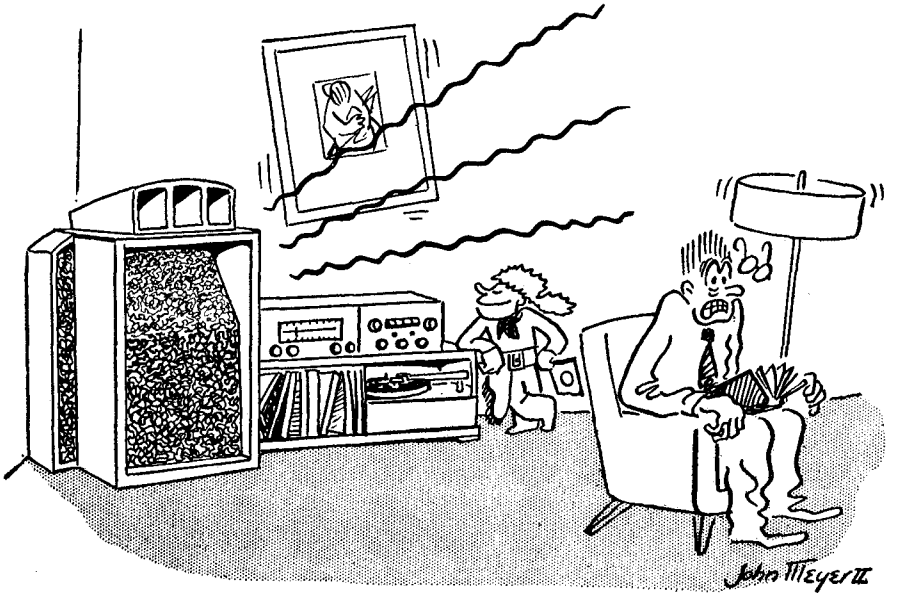
serious factors in its disfavor. The original Boston version, for all its acoustical excellence, suffers from blurred contours that result largely from the overbearing and overresonant tympani sound. A tympanist, as we all know, may easily drown out a whole orchestra by striking too hard or muddy it by failing to dampen his tone. In the Chavez such playing is especially inappropriate, since the hollowness of primitive drums is so often evoked and it is also important that repeated notes be clearly separated.

If I were going to buy the Chavez I should narrow down my choice to the M-G-M and Capitol LPs, and my final decision would then depend on the other works which accompany it in each case. This decision would be a difficult one. Along with the Bartók work, the Capitol disk includes a highly attractive one-movement Concerto for Percussion and Small Orchestra by Milhaud which is quite a rarity (I do not recall it ever having been programmed here on the East coast in my experience of concert-going) while the M-G-M disk has another rarity of far more than average interest, "Ocho por Radio" ("Eight Musicians Broadcasting"), a striking, if not altogether successful, little work by the much neglected Mexican composer, Revueltas, that has the character of calliope music brusquely distorted with bold artistic results. Solomon also conducts Surinach's amusing little dances from "Ritmo Jondo" (excerpts from the score underpinning Doris Humphrey's choreography for "Deep Rythm") as well as Choros No. 7 of Villa-Lobos, a work which, like so much of this composer's music, fails to realize the promise of its initial passages.

Written in 1942, at a time when Chavez would have had to be extraordinarily psychic to predict the exploitation that would be made of him in the name of "high fidelity," the Toccata uses rhythm and percussion in rather mild fashion if we consider it in the light of "Ionisation." Its design is clear and the composer shows unerring appreciation of the capacities and character of the instruments chosen. Like the primitive music it evokes, a little goes a long way, and the length was, perhaps, a miscalculation. I am surprised the composer did not find more imaginative uses for tympani than the progressions by fourths that are its stock-in-trade.

Evoking folk style has its pitfalls, since the challenge is to go beyond it. Chavez has at least given us a fairly well differentiated three-part form. But another new M-G-M item, also conducted by Solomon (E-3160), evokes Armenian music much in the fashion of wallpaper that may be cut at any point. "Khaldis," a concerto for piano, four trumpets and percussion by Hovhaness, is a string of such random cuttings. The passages for trumpets alone are shocking pastiches of Gabrieli or early German tower music, and even if the composer were to adduce Armenian sources to account for them it would be little justification for their use. The tremolos and stubborn pedal-points of his piano-writing, which William Masselos manages with thorough ease, likewise have the character of sounds remembered and facilely reproduced, rather than of music created out of inner experience. The elaborate and subtle Armenian folk music that inspires this composer becomes an end rather than a means.

—Arthur Berger.



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THE OTHER SIDE

MORE STEREOSONIC AND ELECTROSTATIC MATTERS

LONDON.

FOR some years now the May Exhibition of the British Sound Recording Association has drawn an ever-increasing number of audio enthusiasts from all parts of the British Isles to London's Waldorf Hotel. If, on past occasions, some of us had tended to go to these functions out of a sense of duty rather than in the expectation of hearing anything new—and, perhaps, because one could be certain of meeting old friends—the 1955 Exhibition differed markedly from its predecessors. It offered us an exciting glimpse into the future of sound reproduction. This future can be summarised under two distinct headings, both of which have already been referred to in my reports: Stereosonic Sound and Electrostatic Loudspeakers.

Just what kind of a role stereosonic recording is likely to play in the immediate future—Decca is said to be working on a system involving discs, not tape—is not easy to predict, but the rival demonstrations of electrostatic speakers given by Harold Leak and Peter Walker, the respective designers of the Leak and QUAD amplifiers, left us in little doubt that we are about to witness a revolution in that field. Walker's system, developed jointly by his own firm, Acoustical Mfg. Co., and Ferranti, is at present purely experimental and unlikely to reach the market for another two to three years. It is wholly electrostatic and consists of a flat strip about eighteen inches wide by six feet tall (ideally, it should be built into the wall of the room and extend from floor to ceiling). The system shown by Leak, on the other hand, is of more immediate application and employs a conventional-type fifteen-inch "woofer" in association with an electrostatic treble unit of comparatively modest size. It is anticipated that this combination will be available before the end of the year, and Leak quotes the remarkably low price of £35 (ca. $100) for the two units, inclusive of the requisite circuitry (but excluding the enclosure for the "woofer").

I make no apology for dwelling on this subject in some detail, since what I heard at the Waldorf Hotel convinced an extremely skeptical pair of ears (long inured to theoretical claims on behalf of this or that speaker system) that we have here the first genuine advance in this vital sector of sound reproduction since Voigt perfected his Cornor Horn some twenty years ago.

If the BSRA Exhibition provided us with an unmistakable pointer as to "the shape of things to come," it would nevertheless be rash to assume that the end of the moving coil loudspeaker is at hand. Anyone bold enough to advance such a view might well have to contend with Gilbert Briggs, author of such books as "Loudspeakers," "Sound Reproduction," and "Pianos, Pianists, and Sonics" and head of the famous loudspeaker-manufacturing firm of Wharfedale. While the exhibition was in progress, Briggs repeated his astonishing feat of last November when he filled the Royal Festival Hall to capacity for his lecture-demonstration on "Sound Reproduction." Briggs is an admirable and decidedly entertaining lecturer, as New Yorkers will be able to discover for themselves next autumn when he will appear at the Town Hall; his approach is eminently sane, musical, and commendably free from superfluous technical jargon. As before, the most interesting part of the demonstration was undoubtedly that involving direct comparison between live and recorded sound: on this occasion the comparison embraced not only harpsichord, organ, and piano but also a small choir. In the case of the keyboard instruments the results were remarkably successful (the organ, rather surprisingly, seemed to me to suffer least from the "canning" process), but when it came to the choir there was a noticeable loss of definition as well as an absence of true spaciousness, such depth of focus as can only be supplied by stereosonic recording.

—THOMAS HEINITZ.

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The Electrostatic Revolution

By R. S. LANIER

SINCE 1926, when the electronic phonograph began to take over from the earlier "acoustic" machine, the only technical changes in the reproduction of sound worth the name "revolution" have been the LP record and magnetic tape. A third revolution is now getting set to hit us, with the advance guard already on the scene: the electrostatic loudspeaker.

The electrostatic, or "condenser," speaker is radically different from the electromagnetic cone speaker we now use. It works on a different principle; it has an entirely different physical shape; it is cheaper to build for comparable quality of reproduction; and most important, if experience with experimental models can be trusted, it produces a new clarity and spaciousness of sound arising from its own characteristic mode of operation, and making it sound utterly different from the typical cone speaker.

The long-used cone speaker, operating on the forces developed between a magnet and a coil of wire carrying electrical currents, is today giving excellent, thoroughly satisfying reproduction, as everybody knows. But here are the ways in which the cone speaker appears to be vulnerable to the newcomer: the cone speaker takes a lot of space, requiring a huge enclosure for really top-flight performance; when it is very well made the cone speaker is also very expensive; the cone has a tendency not to move all in one piece but to bend and flap, producing a kind of distortion that gives each cone speaker its characteristic "sound"; it is impossible to design a single speaker that does well at both the low and the high ends of the frequency scale, so we have our elaborate systems of woofers and tweeters.

The electrostatic speaker, if it works out according to its trial-heat performances, will eliminate these disadvantages. Basically it is two very thin flat sheets of metallic material, one of them flexible, which are placed very close together with insulation between, like a huge sandwich. There is no magnet. One of the sheets is fixed in the mounting (it may be a grille instead of a fixed sheet) and the other can move a short distance toward and away from the fixed sheet. The two sheets alternately attract and repel each other when electrical voltages are fed to them, in accordance with the principles of electrostatics: *like* voltages repel each other, and *unlike* voltages attract. The moving sheet is in contact with the air and pushes it off into sound.

Here is the first beauty of this device: the whole broad sheet is pushed equally at every point on its surface, and moves as one piece—it is all "in phase," the engineer says. This produces the same clear, true sound at every frequency in the scale, which is especially welcome in the very high treble, where the cone speaker has the most tendency to bend and flap.

Second: As you can judge from the description of it, the speaker is essentially a flat, panel-like object, which takes very little space in depth. The face of the panel can be any size, within limits set by construction difficulties. The amount of sound produced by a speaker goes up as the area goes up.

Third: It seems that it will be very cheap to build, compared to the larger cone systems with two or more speakers in specially-designed enclosures.

Fourth: The sound does not come from a narrow "hole in the wall," but equally from every part of the broad sheet. The effect is startling: the listener feels as though he is outside a wide door opening on a hall where music is being played. The music is "spread out." Psychologically the result is much like binaural sound, though the two are very different.

Just when we get electrostatic speakers is a fact under tight commercial security precautions. There are already some speakers on the market, but these are small types intended to reproduce the very high frequencies only: they are tweeters, which must be supplemented with a cone speaker for the lows. The real ruckus in high fidelity will start if and when we get the big electrostatic speakers which, according to theory, should be capable of reproducing the whole frequency scale. A number of laboratories are known to be working on this. If one or more of them succeed, high fidelity will get a massive shot in the arm—a case of heaping Ossa on Pelion, if ever there was one—and we will have a fine struggle between the two types of speaker, from which the high fidelity consumer can only gain.

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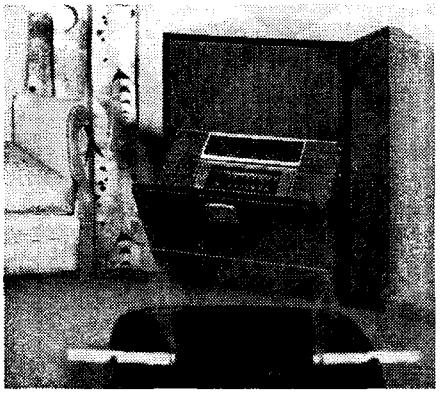

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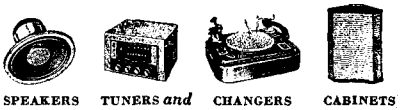

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THE AMEN CORNER

As the Temperature Rises

EARLY summer in steaming New Jersey is no time for critical rigor, but I am still not limp enough to enjoy the singing voice of Chet Baker. This increasingly famous young Californian has a wan, swooning delivery which puts me in mind of those mauve-tinted French postcards in which young men drenched with pomade are seen breathing over the shoulders of plump little queens of coyness. Mark my words, if the girls see fit to yield, they will run the risk of something pretty cloying.

I sail into Baker in this way because he is one of the most admired modern jazz trumpets, playing with a fine purity of invention and, I am glad to hear, with increasing incisiveness (his playing used to be rather pallid, like his singing). It would seem to me that he ought to recognize the expressive disparity between the brightness and delicacy of his horn and the effeteness of his voice as he now uses it. In his new LP his singing also makes it difficult if not impossible to enjoy the playing of such excellent accompanists as Russ Freeman, piano, and Bud Shank, flute (Pacific Jazz PJ LP-1202).

As a devotee of the sophisticated Afro-Cuban vein, I have much enjoyed a program of compositions by Quincy Jones, with such soloists as the band's leader and tenor saxophonist, Paul Quinichette; Herbie Mann, flute; and the wonderfully relaxed and prismatic Jimmy Jones, piano. The three Caribbean-style drummers keep up a happy tintinnabulation. On the reverse are other Quincy Jones numbers, and Sir Charles Thompson takes over at the piano, with Sam Most on the flute (EmArcy MG-36003). This record prompts a sermon to the effect that from now on, most probably, there will be a great many highly musicianly modern jazz records which may not offer flashing landmarks either in composition or improvisation, but which will be full of felicities—in other words, good, subtle music to listen or dance to. The cast of talented modern jazz characters is getting to be a very large one; they have so far been finding many eager record makers; and, if we cannot expect anything like a masterpiece a minute (or a month), we should have many discs highly attractive, here and there, in detail.

For further example, alto saxophonist Bud Shank and valve trombonist Bob Brookmeyer improvise with great virtuosity against a string section (Pacific Jazz PJL-20). I have never been especially fetched by string sections in the jazz context, for the reason that they usually seem to me to do a good deal toward removing that context. The pliable, polyphonic, vigorous things that I have most valued in jazz have had little or nothing to do with the classical device of writing for massed strings. As a matter of fact, my greatest jazz pleasures have come from contrapuntal playing rather than from section work of any sort. I realize that this is a position representing memories and nostalgias rather than the open mind. Be that as it may, in the last-mentioned record, Shank and Brookmeyer are supple and beautifully cooperative, while the strings oblige by being very discreet.

The piano department finds the modern work of John Williams very durable, his strong rhythms ably abetted by Bill Anthony, bass, and Frank Isola, drums. Williams has been a fine band man and sounds like it—he is unspectacular, agile, all pianist, not in the least exhibitionist (EmArcy MG-26047). Randy Weston, who a while ago made some striking piano variations on Cole Porter, is back with some Weston originals and other themes (Riverside RLP-2515). He should be encouraged, I think, to stick to the strongest, most characterful themes he can find, for the most interesting thing about his work at present seems to be the play of his mind against the composer's.

Charlie Barnet, a hero of the swinging Thirties and Forties, has assembled a big band reminiscent of that era and made a pulsing album of Billy May arrangements of famous "Indian" tunes such as "Cherokee," composed by the English bandmaster Ray Noble. The list includes Noble's other tributes to the tribes, "Comanche War Dance," "Seminole" and "Iroquois," as well as monuments like "From the Land of the Sky Blue Waters." Well, I will stride straight through the fire smoke and ask Big Chief Barnet, who was rightfully given election to the Cherokees, if he will please pass me the calumet. There are no real issues between us. The record is superb, swinging dance music, and I have loved many of the tunes since childhood (RCA-Victor LPM-1091).

—WILDER HOBSON.

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From the Source's Mouth

By WHITNEY BALLIETT

AT BEST, writing the history of any art form is—like catching a fish with bare hands—a tricky and nettlesome business. For such history involves not one but two nebulous and continually sliding quantities: the works themselves and their life-giving other halves, the audience. And since taste, the most nervous of all weathers, governs the audience, as well as the historian, what may be a lively and apparently sound history of American literature for one generation will inevitably be antique to another. (Most English professors, for instance, now blink with bewilderment when they point out Vernon Parrington's lapse of judgment in allowing, thirty years ago, just two pages to Henry James and sixteen to James Fenimore Cooper in his otherwise "brilliant" "Main Currents in American Thought.")

These difficulties have been as onerously present in the writing over the past thirty years of the pioneer histories of American jazz. Offhand, however, one would think that jazz, which has been developed over a period of just seventy years in one country by a small number of people, would be, with only three generations of taste swirling about it, comparatively easy to chronicle. But, for one thing, because it is in essence a new artistic form, its interpreters have had to wrestle awkwardly with exactly that—its newness. (In 1926 Henry Osgood published a serious history called "So This Is Jazz." There was not one mention in it of a real jazz musician, although it was filled with encomiums for Paul Whiteman and Ferde Grofé.) And, while trying to make jazz, which is chameleon and mercurial, sit still, they have also had to wade through layers of racial prejudice, a gin-and-whore social aroma, smoke-lined legends which are frequently its only documentation, and mushrooms of nostalgia caused by the very rapidity of the music's growth. In addition to these obstacles, there is the historian's particular bias. Jazz is not a *bric-a-brac* music; it is intense, complicated, heady, and enveloping. It catches at the receptive marrow quicker and harder than any other contemporary creative form. As a result, violent partisanships (the "moldy figs" versus the "modernists," for one), which create gassy and obscuring imbroglios, invariably spring up among listeners as well as musicians. Most histories of jazz, consequently, have been as swimmingly distorted as the images in fun-house mirrors.

Now, Nat Shapiro, an official with Broadcast Music, and Nat Hentoff, a

Lester Young.

I REMEMBER: *A list of selections, chosen at random from "Hear Me Talkin' to Ya," which illustrate some of the color, spirit, and vitality of the book and of jazz.*

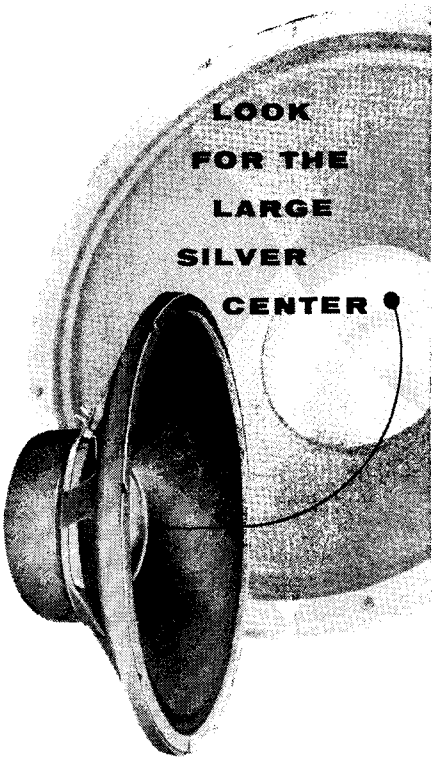
• "I remember Lester Young from when he was blowing cool sounds at the Subway on Eighteenth Street in Kansas City. . . . The first time I heard (him) I was astonished. It took him several choruses to get started—then, brother, what a horn"—*Mary Lou Williams.*

• "I'd stand there listening to King Oliver beat out one of those good ole good-ones like 'Panama' or 'High Society'. . . . My, whatta punch that man had. . . . And he could shout a tune. . . .Ump"—*Louis Armstrong.*

• "Jazz is a very personal way of playing music. Everyone has his own style if he's good"—*Billy Taylor.*

• "New Orleans was what I like to call 'The University of Jazz.' Oh, lots of musicians and bands came from places like Kansas City and Chicago, but there was something—a certain combination of hot weather, dumps, dives, and people—that only New Orleans could provide"—*Frank Walker.*

• "Dizzy (Gillespie) was always jolly like a little bad boy who couldn't sit at attention. . . . Cab (Calloway) would stop a number sometimes, and if the arrangement had been changed he would say: 'Whoever is doing that, the so-and-so should stop it. And you,' he would point to Dizzy, 'I don't want you playing that Chinese music in my band"—*Danny Barker.*



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Hear Me Talkin' To Ya

Edited by NAT SHAPIRO (of B.M.I.) and NAT HENTOFF (of Downbeat)

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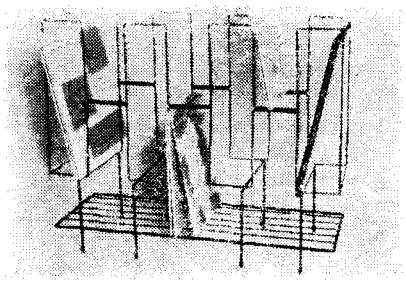

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clear-eared critic and editor of *Downbeat* magazine, have put together a unique, striking, and credible source-book history of jazz (**"Hear Me Talkin' to Ya."** Rinehart, $4). Told in the first person as a kind of collective autobiography by 153 musicians, their wives, bookers, and managers, the book consists of long since librariedor "lost" magazine pieces, excerpts from out of print books, bits from an invaluable scrapbook kept for many years by a New Orleans musician named Danny Barker, and recent interviews conducted by the editors. The voices, many of which reappear, are arranged by subject matter and vary in length from a single sentence to several pages. They start in the shouting, froggy days of New Orleans in the Nineties and end in the Vitalised. cerebral present of Dave Brubeck. Kenny Clarke, and John Graas. The whole has been adroitly pieced together so that each speaker smoothly follows the previous one, as though all of them, the quick and the dead, had somehow been gathered together and recorded in an exemplary seminar on jazz.

Several fresh and valuable things emerge from the book. One is the impressionistic, composite portrait of the American jazzman as a new, struggling, deeply creative, and moving artistic figure. This stands, of course, in direct contrast to the image of the typical jazzman, built up conscientiously by a yellow press, as a red-eyed, incoherent shadow who inhabits steamy nightclubs, stuffs himself with narcotics, dresses in outlandish clothes, makes rude music, and, all in all, cuts a rakish and dissolute swath through the lower regions of American life. A second point the book brings out is the explosive and cornucopic creative energy jazz musicians have been giving, largely to the winds, since its beginnings. For it becomes clear that the working jazzman is, no more and no less, like a poet paid to write for a certain number of hours six nights a week under poor conditions poems that will please himself, his employer, and his listeners—an incredible condition perhaps heretofore paralleled in the arts only by the English poets laureate, who, under the pressures of a coming royal birthday or coronation, usually acquit themselves in a far lumpier fashion. A third value of the book is the new perspectives certain personalities and areas of jazz are fitted into. Thus it is shown that the late arranger-bandleader Fletcher Henderson was probably more responsible than any of his peers (including Benny Goodman) for releasing jazz from the tight corsets of small-band collective improvisation into the larger and looser confines of big ban jazz. And these big bands, it is furthe shown, in turn trained a host of bril liant musicians who have since cre ated another and new small-band jaz A minor but important figure lik Clarence Williams is given space a an influential composer and organize Jabbo Smith, a wild, independent, an razory trumpeter of the late Twentie and early Thirties, is portrayed as or of the first musicians to shy awa from the instructive teachings c Louis Armstrong, whose stylisti weight was spread like thick peanu butter for so long over most of jaz The myth that the various stages c jazz moved in a convenient, succes sive procession from New Orleans t Chicago to New York is perforated while Oliver and Armstrong wer stomping it in Chicago in the lat Twenties, Fletcher Henderson wa already doing it differently in Nev York, and while Buddy Bolden wa blowing his big flag of a trumpet i New Orleans, it is hinted that ther was blossoming at the same time i New York a jazz of pianists.

And, finally, there is a long and ex tremely vivid chapter on the musi that emerged from Kansas City in th late Thirties through the instrumen of Count Basie's band. A streamlined hotly casual way of jazz, it was t become the roots of progressive jazz and a pivot for much contemporary jazz, and, as such, as important to the music as the once sacred balloons released so ebulliently by earlier historians in the names of Jelly Rol Morton, the "Chicago School," and Red Nichols and his Five Pennies.

There are necessary omissions in "Hear Me Talkin' to Ya," which the editors point out could be the first of a multi-volume work, such as the blues, the boogie-woogie pianists, certain big bands like that of Bob Crosby and a host of major musicians, some of whom, for the record, are Frankie Newton, Lawrence Brown, J. C. Higginbotham, Bill Coleman, Jack Jenney, and Vic Dickenson. But here is one way, at least for jazz, of getting around some of the crumpling complexities of writing art history. Since most of these selections were spoken or written from within jazz at various disconnected places and times by men who had relatively few biases to whet, there is a steady feel of truth, stability, and generosity in the book that the sanest critic would have a hard time duplicating. To be sure, inarticulateness, contradictions, and errors of fact are here, but the rolling center of jazz, which has so much steam and beauty in it, comes about as accurately alive—for this generation, anyway—as is possible through the written word.

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Letters to the *RECORDINGS* Editor

MULTIPLE OISTRAKHS?

I HAVE BEEN informed by a Decca representative that there are two David Oistrakhs—father and son—both celebrated violinists. I find this hard to believe. Can you give me any information about this?

A. N. PEGGS.

Waterville, Me.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *There are indeed two Oistrakhs—both celebrated violinists—but they have become known to some as King David and Prince Igor, since the son bears the same surname as Stravinsky.*

VERDI FROM VIENNA

YOUR STORY "Verdi, Non Veritas" [*SR* Apr. 30] was very interesting to read; however, it failed to list the London LS-861 "Ballo in Maschera" excerpts featuring Roswaenge, Martinis, Bayle, and the Vienna Volksoper chorus and orchestra . . . All these artists are admirable.

MAX BETTELHEIM.

New York, N. Y.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *The article in question was selective, not exhaustive, and much other Verdiana was not touched on.*

CAMDEN QUESTIONS

I APPRECIATE the prominence in which you place some of the new Camden recordings. I had been expecting some of the recordings to appear on the "Treasury" list, but what a pleasant surprise it is to see K's "Daphnis" and S's "Nocturnes" at such a price. I am disappointed in not seeing S's Tchaikovsky Fourth in the complete series, but the Sixth that is included is very welcome.

LT. RICHARD L. PICKER.

San Francisco, Cal.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *There is a rumor, so far unsubstantiated, that Camden, New Jersey, is going to change its name to Pseudonym, New Jersey, in accord with RCA's policy in this series.*

CHEERS FOR CHASINS

BRAVOS TO Abram Chasins for his excellent article "High Fidelity and High Fatality" [*SR* Apr. 30]. There are probably many among us who have wanted to raise a high voice against adulating critics who have only abetted the exploitation of young musicians like Badura-Skoda and Gulda by smothering an evaluation of their interpretations under an excessive praise of recorded sound. It should be common knowledge that our musical era lacks a middle generation of musicians, that is, of musicians who would be maturing in the gradual manner of past masters. We have masters and neophytes; death and retirement are quickly reducing the number of masters. That the procedure mentioned by Chasins is leading at least some neophytes to a musical fatality was evidence in a recent statement by Gulda . . .

LOUIS DOBLIN.

Monroe, Mich.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We regret the inability to publish the remainder of reader Doblin's lengthy letter. It is however, expressive of a view which is widely held by music lovers who remember when . . .*

WHO'S FOR MONTEVERDI?

IN REPLY TO AN inquiry of mine, Mr. Alan Kayes of RCA Victor has advised me that, although he considers the first Nadia Boulanger Monteverdi album (DM-496) "worthy of reissue" on the LCT label, there has been little public interest "reflected in consumer mail." Perhaps your excellent magazine could help Mr. Kayes out by asking your readers if they would like to see this set again.

EDMOND MIGNON.

Seattle, Wash.

SINGERS OF THE PAST

I AM ENJOYING your series of articles on great singers of the "Golden Age" very much and look forward to their continuation. Would you please give some attention to Julia Culp in the near future?

HENRY SMALL.

Seattle, Wash.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *This suggestion will certainly be considered, but* RECORDINGS *will give priority to those singers whose acoustic discs are represented in microgroove reissues. As of now Julia Culp does not belong to this company.*

PLAINT FOR WILDER

NOTABLE AMONG the missing in the many recorded plays is a truly American classic, Thornton Wilder's "Our Town." Is there an enterprising company willing to perform such a service?

STANLEY M. SLOME.

Vineland, N. J.

CONCERNING MASON

COLIN MASON [*SR* May 7] cannot face up to the harsh fact that England has produced no major musical talent since Sir Arthur Sullivan.

B. WRIGHT.

Los Angeles, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Reader Wright has apparently overlooked Hayden-Wood, Ivor Novello, Eric Coates, and Noel Coward.*

MASON OMITS

IN COLIN MASON'S article he bemoans the lack of a certain type of composer: "We have no equivalent of Boulez in France, Stockhausen in Germany, Nono in Italy; no practitioner of *musique concrete, not even a mild disciple of Webern*" (Italics mine). . . . I think he should have written about Humphrey Searle, a pupil of Webern and one of the arresting figures in English music today.

MICHAEL STAPLETON.

London, Eng.

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Mason's survey was necessarily concise; perhaps the worldwide aspects of* musique concrete *will come later.*

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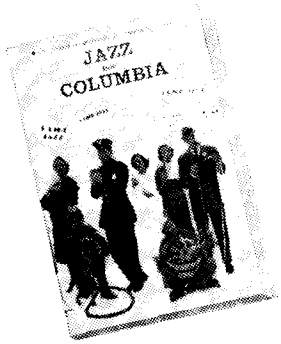
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